

The Highland Council

Minute of Meeting of the **Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area Committee** held in the Chamber, Council Offices, Dingwall, on Wednesday 5 August 2015, at 10.30 am.

Present:

Dr D Alston	Mrs M Paterson
Mrs B Campbell	Mr I Renwick
Mr M Finlayson	Mr A Rhind
Mr H Fraser	Mrs F Robertson
Mr R Greene	Dr A Sinclair
Mr G MacKenzie	Ms M Smith
Mr A MacKinnon	Mr J Stone
Mrs A MacLean	

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Ms D Ferguson, Senior Ward Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Chief Inspector I MacLelland, North Highland Area Commander, Police Scotland
Mr R Nixon, Group Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Mr D Paterson Education Quality Improvement Manager, Care and Learning Service
Ms N Young, Area Education Manager - West, Care and Learning Service
Mr M Crowe, Assistant Area Manager, Community Services
Mr J Holden, Assistant Area Manager, Community Services
Ms L MacKellaich, Road Safety Officer, Community Services
Mrs H Ross, Senior Ward Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Ms A MacArthur, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.

Mr H Fraser in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr I Cockburn, Mr C Fraser, Mrs I McCallum, Mr M Rattray and Mrs C Wilson.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

The Committee **NOTED** the following declaration of interest

- Item 3: Mrs A MacLean (non-financial)

Members agreed to take Items 13 a) and b) and Item 14 at this point in the meeting but items will remain in the agenda order in this Minute for ease of reference.

3. **Police – Area Performance Summary** **Poilis – Geàrr-chunntas an Dèanadais Sgìreil**

Declaration of Interest: Mrs A MacLean declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of Ross-shire Women’s Aid but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No SRC/29/15 by the Area Commander for Police Scotland which updated Members on progress with reference to the local priorities within the Highland 2014-2017 Policing Plan.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- there was concern in relation to anti-social behaviour, particularly in relation to drinking in public places;
- there was also ongoing concern in relation to speeding traffic on Old Evanton Road;
- further information was required on wildlife crime in relation to the Red Kites and in this regard a briefing note should be provided Mrs C Caddick, the Red Kite Champion for the Highland Council;
- an updated would be appreciated on progress made on Police engagement with Community Councils;
- the method of reporting made it difficult to understand trends and future figures should cover the preceding five years to allow for greater scrutiny;
- the i-phone app was a very useful tool and had proved very popular; and
- with so many events in the area in the first week in August, it was acknowledged that this would have an impact on the level of Police cover required.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the content of the report as circulated;
- ii. **AGREED** to bring a report to the Dingwall Ward Business meeting on anti-social behaviour, particularly in relation to drinking in public places;
- iii. **AGREED** that a report be brought to the Dingwall Ward Business Meeting in relation to speeding on Old Evanton Road, Dingwall and that traffic counting equipment be placed on the road to monitor the speed of the traffic;
- iv. **AGREED** that the Highland Council Red Kite Champion should receive updated information on the status of the investigation into the ongoing Red Kite wildlife crime investigation in the form of a briefing note; and
- v. **AGREED** that future reporting figures should cover the preceding five years to allow for greater scrutiny.

4. **Fire and Rescue Service** **Seirbheis Smàlaidh is Teasairginn**

There had been circulated Report No SRC/30/15 by the Local Senior Officer for Fire and Rescue which had set out (in Booklets A and B) the Area Committee Plan for

Skye, Ross and Cromarty for 2014-15 and the Performance Report for Skye, Ross and Cromarty for the period Dec 2014 - June 2015, together with an overview of performance figures for years 2010/11-2013/14 (Appendix 1 – Booklet A).

During discussion, Members congratulated the Fire and Rescue Service on the Open Day which had been held in Dingwall Fire Station during which the retained Fire Officers had given their free time to attend. In this regard, it was felt that the Open Day had been beneficial for a number of reasons, including potential future recruitment, and it had been a pleasure to witness the pride which had been taken in the Fire Station.

Appreciation was also conveyed to the local employers who allowed the retained Fire Officers to have leave for fire duties.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the content of the report as circulated; and
- ii. **AGREED** that clarification should be provided on the trends in relation to the figures reported in respect of False Alarm calls.

5. Road Repair Method Dòighean Càraidh Rathaidean

A presentation was undertaken at the meeting by Mr M Crowe, Assistant Area Manager, on Road Repair Methods.

During discussion, Members made reference to the scheduled re-surfacing work which was to be undertaken and it was suggested that clarification was required on when this was to take place and what would be involved. Also, a list of costs for the different levels of repair would be helpful for Members, as well as information on the equipment to be used and the level of training required.

Reference was also made to the drains at Fodderty Cemetery which were in a bad state of repair and clarification was sought on the timescale for this work to be undertaken.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** that a copy of the presentation and the cost information presented should be provided for Members.

It was also **AGREED** that information on the road repair methods used should be provided for Community Councils.

6. Winter Maintenance Priority Network - 2015/16 Lìonra Prìomhachais Obair-càraidh Geamhraidh – 2015/16

There had been circulated Report No SRC/31/15 by the Director of Community Services which provided information on the Winter Maintenance service provision for the 2015/16 Winter period.

During discussion, Members suggested that the circulated maps should be printed on A3 to enable them to be read more easily and also that there should be clarification on changes to any routes from the previous year.

It was also suggested that the routes should be reviewed at Ward Business meetings before being approved.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** to delegate approval of the Winter Maintenance Priority Network 2015/16 to the Community Services Manager, in consultation with the Chair, after review at Ward Business Meetings, with any changes to the previous Years' Plan being highlighted in future reports.

7. Grounds Maintenance Programme Prògram Gleidhidh Thalmhainn

There had been circulated Report No SRC/32/15 by the Director of Community Services which detailed performance management information for Grounds Maintenance Services from April to June 2015.

In this regard, it was confirmed that the cutting of road verges had been substantially decreased, contract monitoring was undertaken by a Performance Co-ordinator and Contract Supervisors based at Council Headquarters, shrub beds were dealt with differently in different areas (some Common Good Funds covered the costs of Council work on shrub beds), default notices sometimes required the workforce to be diverted from routine duties which could delay the completion of routine maintenance and core paths were not considered a priority in terms of the Service budget.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the performance management and remedial action information on the Grounds Maintenance Service as detailed in the report and the management action being taken to address the performance issues which had been identified.

It was also **AGREED** that in future the reporting tables should be presented in a more simplified and meaningful format for Ward Business Meetings.

8. Housing Performance Report Aithisg Dèanadais a thaobh Taigheadais

There had been circulated Report No SRC/33/15 dated 15 July 2015 by the Director of Community Services which provided Members with information on how the Housing Section had performed in relation to the Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators during 2014/15 and for the first quarter of 2015/16.

The Committee **NOTED** the content of the report as circulated .

9. Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets Programme Prògram Rothaireachd, Coiseachd agus Sràidean nas Sàbhailte

There had been circulated Report No SRC/34/15 dated 30 June 2015 by the Director of Community Services which invited Members to approve the projects delivered through the Scottish Government funding for Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets for the Skye, Ross and Cromarty area as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

In this regard, the Road Safety Officer advised that, although there was no legal requirement to wear cycle helmets, the Bikeability Programme strongly advised that helmets were worn while undertaking the cycling proficiency training in schools.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** to:-

- i. **APPROVE** the Safer Routes to School (SRTS) Projects as listed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- ii. **NOTED** that the Road Safety Unit would continue to work with Schools to further develop projects for future years.

10. Street Naming – New Housing Developments
Ainmeachadh Sràide - Leasachaidhean Ùra Taigheadais

There had been circulated Report No SRC/35/15 by the Head of Policy and Reform in regard to the creation of addresses, following consultation with the respective Community Councils and Local Members, for new housing developments at Bellfield and Lettoch Farm, North Kessock.

The Committee:

- i. **HOMOLOGATED** the naming of the road in Phase D, Ness Road Housing development, Fortrose as 'Cornwell Crescent'; and
- ii. **HOMOLOGATED** the naming of the new street in Phase 6, land at Bellfield and Lettoch Farm, North Kessock as 'Yairs Rise'.

11. Investing in Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area – Capital Projects
Tasgadh ann an Inbhir Nis agus a Sgìre – Pròiseactan Calpa

There had been circulated Report No SRC/36/15 dated 17 July 2015 by the Director of Finance which listed the Capital Projects included in the Council's Capital Programme being delivered in the Skye, Ross and Cromarty area in the financial year 2015/16 and the in-year budgets for these projects.

The Committee **NOTED** the content of the report as circulated.

12. Common Good Funds
Maoin Maith Choitchinn

There had been circulated Report Nos SRC/037/15 – SRC/041/15 by the Head of Policy and Reform which provided information on the following Common Good Funds: Cromarty, Dingwall, Fortrose and Rosemarkie, Invergordon and Tain.

The Committee **APPROVED** the updated information in relation to each Fund.

13. Associated School Group Overviews
Sealladh Coitcheann air Buidheann Sgoiltean Co-cheangailte

a) Ullapool High School Associated School Group Overview

There had been circulated Report No SRC/42/15 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update of key information in relation to the Schools

within the Ullapool High School Associated School Group (ASG) and provided useful updated links to further information in relation to these school

The Committee **NOTED** the content of the report.

b) Tain Royal Academy Associated School Group Overview

There had been circulated Report No SRC/43/15 dated by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update of key information in relation to the Schools within the Tain Royal Academy Associated School Group (ASG) and provided useful updated links to further information in relation to these schools.

In this regard, it was confirmed that the Youth Link Officer pilot had been very successful in keeping unauthorised absences to a minimum and it was hoped that funding could be continued through the Deprived Area Fund. It was also suggested that former pupils could be asked to return to provide encouragement and motivation to pupils in the senior years and that this should be discussed with the Senior Management Team

The Chair also congratulated pupils in Highland on their recently obtained examination results with particular mention being made of seven pupils in Dingwall Academy who had obtained 5 "A" passes at higher level.

Thereafter, the Committee otherwise noted the content of the report as circulated and **AGREED** that in future the Associated School Group Overviews should be reported to the relevant Ward Business Meetings.

14. Education Scotland Reports Sgrùdaidhean le Foghlam Alba

There had been circulated Report No SRC/44/15 dated 26 July 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided details of Education Scotland's Inspections in the area during the period from March to June 2015 for the following schools:

- i. Milton Primary;
- ii. Alness Academy;
- iii. Tain Royal Academy and
- iv. St Clements School and Nursery Class, Dingwall.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- St Clements School, Dingwall – the new Head Teacher had made a vast improvement to the School through working collaboratively with both parents and teachers and this was appreciated. In addition, support was sought by Local Members for the building of a new school;
- Alness Academy had done very well in 'The Rock Challenge' and in science projects but it was felt that there needed to be a stronger emphasis on the academic level of the School; and
- effective leadership was very important and had turned around many Schools and in this regard, the Head Teacher Workshop in Dingwall had been especially beneficial.

Thereafter, the Committee otherwise **NOTED** the content of the report as circulated.

**15. Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund
Sgeama Thabhartasan Coimhearsnachd Càrboin Ciallaich**

There had been circulated Report No SRC/45/15 by the Head of Policy and Reform which set out the applications received for the Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund for Skye, Ross and Cromarty.

The Committee **AGREED**:

(i) the following funding recommendations:-

11048 – Lochalsh and Skye Swimming Pool Association Ltd - £13,449

11446 – Black Isle Bicycles - £5,862

11447 – Muir of Ord (Tarradale) Community Council - £22,415

11448 – Sleat Community Trust - £7,257

11449 – Lochbroom Woodfuels - £8,517

(ii) that the funding shortfall detailed at Paragraph 3.3 of the report should be considered under individual Ward Discretionary budgets at Ward Business Meetings.

**16. Minutes of Meetings
Geàrr-chunntas**

The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes of the Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area Committee Meeting which had been held on 22 April 2015 (and which had been approved by the Highland Council at its meeting on 14 May 2015).

The meeting ended at 2.55 pm.