

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Education, Children and Adult Services Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday, 8 October 2015 at 10.05 am.

### Present:

#### Highland Council:

Mr D Millar (Chair)	Mr S Fuller
Mr A Baxter (Substitute)	Mr K Gowans
Mrs C Caddick	Mrs D Mackay
Miss J Campbell (Substitute)	Mr G MacKenzie
Mr A Christie	Mrs M Paterson
Dr I Cockburn (Substitute)	Ms G Ross
Mrs M Davidson	Mr G Ross
Mr M Finlayson	Ms J Slater
Mr H Fraser	

#### NHS Highland:

Dr M Foxley  
Dr C Stark  
Ms S Amor

#### Religious Representatives:

Dr A Fraser  
Ms M McCulloch  
Mr G Smith

#### Youth Convener:

Ms C Bateson

#### Non-Members also present:

Mr B Fernie	Mr G Rimell
Mr B Clark	Ms L Munro
Ms J Douglas	Mr A Rhind
Mrs D Mackay	Mr J Rosie
Mrs I McCallum	Mr D Kerr

#### In attendance:

Mr B Alexander, Director of Care and Learning  
Ms F Palin, Head of Adult Services, Care and Learning Service  
Mr B Porter, Head of Resources, Care and Learning Service  
Mr J Steven, Head of Education, Care and Learning Service  
Mr R Campbell, Estate Strategy Manager, Care and Learning Service  
Mr E Foster, Finance Manager, Finance Service  
Ms V Gale, Care and Learning Alliance (Third Sector)  
Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager  
Miss J Green, Administrative Assistant  
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant

## **Also in attendance:**

Mr I Murray, Chief Executive, High Life Highland  
Miss I O'Brien, Gold Youth Achievement Award

**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 D Millar in the Chair**

### **Business**

#### **1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr D Alston, Mrs I Campbell, Mr B Gormley, Mr M Green, Mr W MacKay, Mrs B McAllister, Mr M Rattray, Mrs F Robertson, Mrs M Duncan and Dr H van Woerden.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

The Committee **NOTED** the following Declarations of Interest:-

Item 3 – Mr D Millar, Mr K Gowans and Ms J Douglas (Non-Financial)

Item 3 – Mr K Gowans (Financial)

Item 5 – Mr K Gowans and Ms J Douglas (Non-Financial)

Item 5 – Mr K Gowans (Financial)

Item 7 – Mr S Fuller, Mr A Baxter and Mr K Gowans (Financial)

Item 7 – Mr K Gowans and Ms J Douglas (Non-Financial)

Item 13 – Ms J Douglas (Financial)

Item 14 – Mr K Gowans (Non-Financial)

Item 16 – Mrs G Ross (Financial)

#### **3. Presentation: Achievement Awards Taisbeanadh: Duaisean Coileanaidh**

##### **Declarations of Interest:**

**Mr D Millar and Ms J Douglas declared non-financial interests in this item on the grounds of being members of the Highland Awards Programme but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

**Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item as Directors of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

**In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in**

**Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/79/15 dated 15 September 2015 by the Chief Executive, High Life Highland, which summarised the range of Achievement Awards available in the Highland area for young people.

It was confirmed that the Awards, including the Youth Achievement Award, Duke of Edinburgh Award, HLH Leadership Programme, Saltire Award and the John Muir Award, represented something for everyone and positive outcomes had been highlighted through the positive effect on participants' lives and an increasing number of volunteers in the area.

Thereafter, a Presentation was undertaken by Miss Isla O'Brien during which she highlighted how she had personally benefitted from undertaking the Gold Youth Achievement Award, including through her involvement in the Peer Education networking event, the Christmas Fayre for 2015, the Rock Challenge and the Play Scheme for 2014.

During discussion, Members conveyed their congratulations to the young people who had taken part in and achieved Awards and also to the Teachers and staff within Schools who had supported them. In this regard, it was stressed that it was crucial that enough time was made available for involvement and also that pupils from all backgrounds were given an equal chance to participate.

The positive feedback from communities across the Highlands confirmed the benefits which could be gained from the Awards and as such it was imperative that as many volunteers as possible, both young and adult, were encouraged to become involved in the future and that the diverse range of activities undertaken by High Life Highland continued to be highlighted.

Having thanked Miss O'Brien for her extremely informative presentation, the Committee otherwise **NOTED** both the range and content of the various Awards and the benefits for the young people who were participating in them.

#### **4. Outstanding Achievements Coileanaidhean Air Leth**

There had been tabled a List of Outstanding Achievements by People and Groups as follows:-

Jonathan Evannett - First Class Honours\_– Jonathan, a profoundly deaf former Dingwall Academy pupil, graduated with a First Class Honours Degree in Engineering from Strathclyde University. He was supported through his education by the Highland Deaf Education Service.

Kirsteen Graham – Traditional Music Hall of Fame - a Skye-based Gaelic singing tutor who has spent the past 24 years supporting Highland Council's Gaelic Medium schools on the island, Kirsteen has been inducted into the Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame. She retired from working in schools at the end of the last academic session and was honoured at a ceremony held in Inverness Airport on 11 September. Depute Provost of Inverness, Councillor Jean Slater, supported the awards and

presented prizes to those honoured. The Scottish Traditional Music Hall of Fame is dedicated to giving acknowledgement and recognition to musicians and industry people who, by their dedication and hard work, have supported and influenced the development of Scottish traditional music during their lives.

Nancy McAdam - Lifetime Achievement Award - Black Isle resident Nancy was recognised with a Lifetime Achievement Award in Scotland's Dementia Awards 2015. The Awards are a partnership between Alzheimer Scotland, NHS Education for Scotland, NHS Health Scotland and the Scottish Social Services Council. She lives on her own on a remote croft and was diagnosed with vascular dementia at the age of 58. In 2004, she was the joint founder of the Inverness Dementia Memory Group – the first Highland Involvement Group for People with a diagnosis of dementia.

Megan Sutherland – Harvard Summer School – a care leaver from Highland, Megan completed the Harvard Summer School in 2015. She ran a successful blog of her experiences, with over 8,000 hits, at <https://highlandstoharvard.wordpress.com/> A pupil of Culloden Academy, Megan hopes to go on to university to study medicine.

During discussion, reference was made to the outstanding 'Rock Challenge' event which had been held in Inverness earlier in the year.

It was also agreed that a letter of commendation should be sent to the American Football Team, 'Highland Wildcats', to congratulate them on their recent national successes and their ongoing work with young people in the area.

Finally, and with reference to the Curriculum for Excellence, it was stressed that there was a need to continue to pursue the recognition of British Sign Language at SQA level wherever possible.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the List of Outstanding Achievements as tabled and commended all those involved on their success.

## **5. Revenue Budget – Monitoring 2015/16 Buidseat Teachd-a-steach – Sgrùdadh 2015/16**

### **Declarations of Interest:**

**Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item as Directors of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

**In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/80/15 dated 24 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update in relation to the Revenue Budget for Care and Learning and the monitoring position for the current year to 31 August 2015.

In this regard, the report also provided an update in relation to agreed Budget Savings, proposals in relation to Building Cleaning budget savings, an update on the Looked After Children budget and also on the review of Janitorial/Facilities Management services.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the projected overspend was concerning but the assurances given that it was expected that this would decrease were welcomed;
- the situation in relation to Out of Authority Placements was disappointing and further information was needed on the unexpected ending of placements;
- more clarification was required on Building Cleaning budget savings and specifically the impact on staff, taking into account both equalities and health & safety issues where necessary;
- the Facilities Management model had previously been identified as being cost neutral but was now classed as a budget pressure and this was disappointing;
- there was a need to avoid compulsory redundancies wherever possible;
- it was imperative that all proposals for budget savings were rigorously tested in the first instance;
- a further report was required on PPP issues/savings and should take account of what had been achieved by other Local Authorities in this regard;
- there was concern about the increase in secure placements and this should perhaps be factored into future budgets; and
- the update on the very positive Teacher Summit with the Cabinet Secretary which had been undertaken during the previous week was welcomed, particularly in terms of taking forward proposals for a co-ordinated approach to recruitment.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** the forecast outturn based upon the year to 31 August 2015;
- ii. **NOTED** the status of the agreed budget savings and mitigating action being taken to address the forecast shortfall;
- iii. **NOTED** the update provided in relation to Looked After Children;
- iv. **AGREED** the revised structure for Building Cleaning to progress delivery of the agreed budget saving; and
- v. **NOTED** the update provided in relation to the review of Janitorial/Facilities Management services.

## **6. Care and Learning Capital Programme – Monitoring Report Prògram Calpa a' Chùrain agus an Ionnsachaidh – Aithisg Sgrùdaidh**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/81/15 dated 29 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the Care and Learning Capital Programme and set out the monitoring position for the current financial year to the end of August 2015.

In this regard, there had also been tabled Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities, Scottish Government, in response to the Chair's letter which had been circulated with the agenda papers.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- there was a need for an urgent assessment of the condition of Alness Academy and if necessary a further letter should be forwarded to the Cabinet Secretary in this regard;
- it was imperative that there was sufficient staff resources in place to oversee projects in view of earlier concerns which had been highlighted by Members in this regard;
- the Charleston Academy project was welcomed but there was also a need to provide a focus on Science facilities within the building as part of future discussion;
- there was a need for a specific timetable to be produced for the Ullapool Primary project;
- an update was required on the current situation in regard to the Toy Box, Gairloch; and
- assurances were necessary that all eight projects which had been listed within the report would be carried forward and included within the Capital Programme for the following year.

Thereafter, the Committee **APPROVED**:-

- i. the capital monitoring position to the end of August 2015 and the year-end forecast for 2015/16 as detailed in Section 1 and Appendix 1;
- ii. the current status of major projects as outlined in Paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3 and Appendix 2;
- iii. the projects listed in Paragraph 2.4 to be progressed as priorities for inclusion in the 2015/16 Programme;
- iv. the current position with the Easter Ross Schools as detailed in Section 3 and Appendices 3 and 4; and
- v. the current position in relation to school statutory consultations and the review of currently mothballed schools as detailed in Section 4 of the report.

**7. Care and Learning Capital Programme – Future Investment Priorities**  
**Prògram Calpa a' Chùraim agus an Ionnsachaidh – Prìomhachasan Tasgaidh an Ama ri Teachd**

**Declarations of Interest:**

**Mr S Fuller, Mr K Gowans and Mr A Baxter declared financial interests in this item on the grounds of having children who received free school meals but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion, other than if there was any specific discussion on free school meals in which case they would leave the room.**

**Ms J Douglas and Mr K Gowans declared non-financial interests in this item as Directors of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

**In addition, Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland but, having applied the test outlined in**

**Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/82/15 dated 29 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which set out a proposed process for establishing future investment priorities for generic budget lines within the Capital Programme.

In this regard, it was confirmed that through this process the intention would be to engage with Members at Ward level on Officer assessments of priorities in order to capture views on local priorities and thereafter to bring a report back to the Committee for approval.

The establishment of future priorities would then allow forward allocation of budget lines on a 2-3 year basis which would improve forward planning and delivery of projects and also provide greater certainty for communities and Members.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the proposal for consideration at Ward level was welcomed and as such it was important that information was provided for Local Members in advance of such meetings wherever possible;
- assurances were required that the two new buildings currently being constructed in Wick would be large enough to provide and accommodate childcare provision;
- there was a need for special consideration to be given to the current situation within the Inverness South area and for any future planning to be undertaken in conjunction with the Development & Infrastructure Service;
- it was important for Schools to be able to provide sustainable levels of education in as many areas as possible in the future;
- it would perhaps be necessary for Wards to jointly discuss proposals for larger areas;
- it had to be recognised that there were no easy solutions as the situation was continually evolving across the area;
- it was important that young people were also involved in all stages of discussion; and
- consideration should be given to a 'Southern Distributor' Workshop in view of the complexities and specific issues within this particular area.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the proposed approach as outlined in the report; and
- ii. **NOTED** the proposed timescale for the consultation process to take place at Ward level.

**8. Adult Social Care Year End Outturn 2014/15 and Forward Look to 2016/17  
Fìor Shuidheachadh Deireadh Bliadhna Cùram Sòisealta Inbheach 2014/15 agus Sùil Air Adhart gu 2016/17**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/83/15 dated 21 September 2015 by the Director of Finance, NHS Highland, which provided an update on the Adult Social Care Year End Outturn for 2014/15 and the Forward Look to 2016/17.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- there was a need for more detailed information and a specific timeframe in relation to unachieved savings;
- any reduction in investment in relation to Adult Social Care would require to be discussed by the Council in the first instance;
- consideration should be given to change the meeting cycle for the Strategic Commissioning Group if this was causing a delay in the submission of information for Members;
- the impact on services of unachieved savings required to be clearly highlighted in future reports;
- the specific allocation of monies towards Adult Social Care, including all ring-fenced monies, should be clearly highlighted;
- there was reference to 'Other Savings' of £0.9m) within the report and this required further clarification;
- a comprehensive update of the additional capacity through new care homes and the lifting of embargoes was needed for a future meeting; and
- there was concern at reference within the report of a likelihood of reduction in investment in Adult Social Care given the uncertainties surrounding the Revenue Grant from the Scottish Government for 2016/17.

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

## 9. Children's Services – Performance Report Seirbheisean Chloinne – Aithisg Dèanadais

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/84/15 dated 29 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the performance framework for Children's Services.

In this respect, a correction to Indicator 75 (the percentage of schools awarded an evaluation of good or better for self-evaluation in HMI inspections increases) was highlighted whereby it was confirmed that the figures should be '60%' (and not '40%' as detailed in the report).

During discussion, it was suggested that further information should be provided on Indicator 55 (the number of hits on pages relating to children and young people on the Substance Misuse Website increases) if possible.

Also, in regard to Indicator 80 (Number of Looked After Children in placements supported through the FF scheme (Highland Council) increases), it was confirmed that the figures quoted in the report had been submitted in error and would be corrected for future reports.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the performance information; and
- ii. **AGREED** the proposed amendments to key performance measures as detailed in the report.



## **10. Allied Health Professional Services** **Seirbheisean Proifeiseanta Slàinte Caidreabhach**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/85/15 dated 28 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the progress being made on the reporting of waiting times data and additional context around the work of Allied Health Professions within Highland Council.

In this regard, the provided examples of Allied Health Professional developments which had taken place since integration to improve the outcomes for children through universal, targeted and specialist intervention, introduced the data around service waits experienced by children and outlined the approach to vacancy management, including proposals to decrease gaps in service provision.

The Committee **NOTED** the information provided in relation to Allied Health Professions as detailed in the report.

## **11. Adults with Incapacity** **Inbhich le Neo-chomas**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/86/15 dated 28 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which outlined powers in relation to the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and recommended that there should be greater awareness across the community of the importance of making arrangements for Power of Attorney in order to ensure that measures could be put in place for the care of an adult without delay should they become incapable.

In this regard, it was confirmed that Health and Social Care professionals had a key role in making people aware of the importance of making arrangements for Power of Attorney at the time when they were capable of doing so.

During discussion, it was stressed that Power of Attorney in such circumstances was an extremely important issue and there was a need for it to be highlighted wherever and whenever possible, specifically in advance of the actual need for it, as it was felt that many people were unaware of the issues which could face them and their families at the time of admission to hospital.

It was also suggested that there was a need for more clarity on the different types of Power of Attorney which were available.

Thereafter, it was **AGREED** that Members had a role in assisting wherever possible in making constituents aware of the importance of setting up arrangements for Power of Attorney as detailed in the report.

## **12. Educational Attainment Update** **Cunntas às Ùr mu Bhuileachadh Foghlaim**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/87/15 dated 29 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided the initial analysis of school performance in the SQA exams in 2015.

In this regard, it was confirmed that a more detailed analysis would be provided at a future meeting.

During discussion, and having congratulated the young people within the Highland area on their successes in their exams, reference was made to the flexibility of curriculum models and specifically the need for further consideration to be given as to whether it would be possible to offer 8 qualifications as opposed to the present 6 qualifications.

It was also suggested that there was a need for more information on what preparatory measures were in place prior to pupils undertaking National 5 qualifications and also how much discussion and/or awareness there was amongst external employers/organisations in relation to such qualifications.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the initial analysis of the current year's SQA results as detailed in the report.

### **13. School Lets Màil Sgoile**

#### **Declaration of Interest:**

**Ms J Douglas declared a financial interest in this item on the basis of a connection to a group in receipt of a School Let 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, other than if there was specific discussion of that group in which case she would leave the room.**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/88/15 dated 24 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which set out the proposed scope of a review of the School Lets charging policy to support delivery of an agreed £150,000 savings target on School Lets income.

In this regard, it was confirmed that the scope of the review was intended to achieve the financial target set by the Council, review and clarify the free lets policy, ensure that charges were simple, transparent, consistent and equitable, ensure that the position in relation to organisations in receipt of direct financial support from the Council was clear and maintain access to School facilities in line with the Council Programme commitment that all new School buildings would act as community hubs.

During discussion, and with reference to the proposed consultation with representative stakeholders, it was stressed that discussion had to be undertaken with those persons who were holding lets.

It was also suggested that clarity was required in terms of how and where charities were to be included as part of the review.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** the scope of the School Lets review as detailed in the report.

(At this point, the meeting adjourned for lunch and resumed at 1.45pm).

## 14. Management of Schools Rianachd Sgoiltean

### Declaration of Interest:

**Mr K Gowans declared a non-financial interest in this item on the basis of being a member of the EIS Union but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/89/15 dated 29 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which outlined proposals for consideration as part of a strategy to enhance support for Head Teachers and sustain management in schools across the authority.

In this regard, it was confirmed that it was intended that these ideas would be developed further in dialogue with Head Teachers and other stakeholders.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- this was a 'milestone' report and the opportunity to begin discussion on a range of issues was welcomed;
- there was a need to adopt a cautious approach when focusing on Janitorial Services in view of the review of such services which was currently being undertaken;
- the challenges in filling Head Teacher and other management posts within the Highland area had to be recognised;
- support for Head Teachers and Schools had to be paramount throughout this process;
- it was clear that there were many other pressures on Head Teachers, such as their responsibilities connected to budgets, people, buildings, etc, and these also had to be acknowledged;
- the responsibilities of Depute Head Teachers and the need to also provide support for them should also be considered;
- any suggested changes in relation to cleaning services would have to take account of the potential future impact on school buildings and staff;
- a review of recruitment practices, including a focus on the potential for cross-Authority arrangements, could be beneficial for all concerned;
- there was a need to identify opportunities to support Teachers who wished to make the transition to a Head Teacher role;
- improvements in the provision of Teacher training within the Highlands should be explored as this could help to retain Teachers in the area in the long term;
- existing staff, parents and children had to be involved from the beginning of this process in order to ensure that they felt fully involved and able to identify both examples of best practice and perceived failings at an early date;
- in terms of recruitment, some local communities had already been actively pursuing new and innovative ideas and it was vital that they were also identified and involved from the outset;
- the workloads of Head Teachers could vary across areas and this should be acknowledged as part of the process; and

- there were significant additional support needs in some Schools within the Highlands and this needed to be highlighted and addressed as part of the strategy for improvement where necessary.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- NOTED** the issues raised in the report; and
- AGREED** that they should form the basis of more detailed discussions with Head Teachers and other stakeholders.

#### **15. Chief Social Work Officer Report – 2014/15 Aithisg Prìomh Oifigeir Obrach-Shòisealta – 2014/15**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/90/15 dated 25 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which introduced the Annual Report 2014/15 by the Chief Social Work Officer.

In this regard, thanks were conveyed to the Chief Social Work Officer for the extremely detailed and informative report which had been produced and which covered a range of issues, including Highland Partnership Structures and Governance Arrangements, the Social Services Landscape, Finance, Service Quality and Performance, Statutory Functions, Improvement Approaches, User and Carer Empowerment and Workforce Planning and Development.

The Committee otherwise **NOTED** the terms of the Annual Report as circulated.

#### **16. Internal Audit Reports Aithisgean In-sgrùdaidh**

##### **Declaration of Interest:**

**Ms G Ross declared a financial interest in this item (and specifically Financial Procedures in Schools) on the grounds that a family member was a Teacher at Thurso High Scholl 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, other than if there was any specific discussion on Thurso High School in which case she would leave the room.**

There had been circulated Report No ECAS/91/15 dated 27 September 2015 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an overview and update in relation to six internal audit reports which had recently been considered by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee:-

- Ben Wyvis Primary School Project
- School Lets Arrangements
- Primary School Fund – System Weaknesses
- Records Management, Nairn
- SEEMiS Integrated School Management System
- Financial Procedures in Schools

During discussion on the Ben Wyvis Primary School Project report, and following confirmation that the Chief Executive had now written to all parties concerned to

apologise for the failings which had been identified within the audit report, reference was made to the very high levels of upset and disappointment which were still being felt in the communities which had been affected.

In this regard, the Leader of the Council highlighted the substantive debate which had been undertaken at the last Audit & Scrutiny Committee which had demonstrated both the strength of the internal audit process and the high level of scrutiny within the Council. In addition, she confirmed that a report was to be submitted to the next meeting of the Resources Committee in November on proposed improvements to the Project Management process, which would include new measures at a much earlier date to deal with projects which were not proceeding as expected and mechanisms to allow concerns to be raised by both Elected Members and communities in this respect.

With specific reference to this particular project, she advised that arrangements could be made for further meetings with Local Members and residents within both communities if this was felt necessary and that she would be happy to take forward proposals for a 'celebration event' to celebrate both learning and teaching within the School.

The Committee otherwise **NOTED** progress in relation to the agreed management action as circulated.

**17. Appointment of Chair of Caithness District Partnership  
Cur an Dreuchd Cathraiche gu Com-pàirteachas Sgìre Ghallaibh**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr W Mackay as Chair of Caithness District Partnership.

**18. Appointment to Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership  
Cur an Dreuchd gu Com-pàirteachas Deoch-làidir is Dhrogaichean na Gàidhealtachd**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mrs I Campbell to the Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership.

**19. Minutes  
Geàrr-chunntas**

The Committee **NOTED**, and **APPROVED** where necessary, the following Minutes of Meetings:-

- i. Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership Strategy Group – 19 May 2015;
- ii. Highland Child Protection Committee – 9 June 2015;
- iii. FHC4 Leadership Group – 24 June 2015;
- iv. FHC4 Leadership Group – 26 August 2015;
- v. Duncraig Trust Scheme Sub-Committee – 2 September 2015; and
- vi. Adult Services Development and Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 4 September 2015.

The meeting ended at 2.35pm.