

The Highland Council

Minute of Meeting of the **Ross and Cromarty Committee** held in the Chamber, Council Offices, Dingwall, on Wednesday 3 February 2016, at 10.30 am.

Present:

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| Dr D Alston | Mr A MacKinnon |
| Mrs J Barclay | Mrs A MacLean |
| Mrs B Campbell | Mrs I McCallum |
| Dr I Cockburn | Mr A Rhind |
| Mr M Finlayson | Mrs F Robertson |
| Mr C Fraser | Dr A Sinclair |
| Mr R Greene | Ms M Smith |
| Mr G MacKenzie | Mr J Stone |

Officials in Attendance:

Mrs C McDiarmid, Head of Policy and Reform
Mrs H Ross, Senior Ward Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Ms D Agnew, Ward Manager
Mr R Bain, Ward Manager
Mr D Paterson Education Quality Improvement Manager, Care and Learning Service
Mr T Stott, Principal Planner
Ms R Barbour, Graduate Planner
Mr A Gunn, Head of Revenues and Business Support
Mr D G C Mackenzie, Chief Structural Engineer, Development and Infrastructure
Mrs A MacArthur, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

Also in Attendance:

Inspector D Ogilvie, Police Scotland

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

The Senior Ward Manager took the Chair pending the appointment of the Chair at item 3 below.

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

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs M Paterson and Mrs C Wilson.

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

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

- Item 10 ii: Mrs J Barclay (non-financial)

3. **Appointment of Chair Cur Cathraiche an Dreuchd**

The Senior Ward Manager invited nominations for the Chair.

Mrs F Robertson, seconded by Mrs I Campbell nominated Mrs M Paterson as Chair of the Committee.

Mr I Cockburn, seconded by Ms M Smith nominated Mr G Mackenzie as Chair of the Committee.

On a vote being taken, 9 votes were cast in favour of Mrs M Paterson and 7 in favour of Mr G MacKenzie as follows:

For Mrs M Paterson (9)

Mrs J Barclay
Mrs I Campbell
Mr M Finlayson
Mr R Greene
Mrs I McCallum
Mr A Rhind
Mrs F Robertson
Mrs A Sinclair
Mr J Stone

For Mr G MacKenzie (7)

Dr D Alston
Mr I Cockburn
Mr C Fraser
Mr G MacKenzie
Mr A MacKinnon
Mrs A MacLean
Ms M Smith

The Committee therefore **AGREED** to appoint Mrs M Paterson as Chair of the Ross and Cromarty Committee.

4. **Appointment of Vice Chair Cur Iar-Chathraiche an Dreuchd**

The Senior Ward Manager then invited nominations for the Vice Chair and it was unanimously **AGREED** that Mr G MacKenzie be appointed as Vice Chair to the Ross and Cromarty Committee.

In the absence of Mrs Paterson, Mr G MacKenzie took the Chair for the meeting.

5. Localism Action Plan Plana Gnìomh Ionadaileachd

There had been circulated Report No RC/001/16 by the Head of Policy and Reform. The report highlighted the new devolved powers for the Committee and the further powers likely to be devolved in 2016. It provided an up-date of work with partners on local community planning arrangements which Members would be involved in during 2016.

Members made the following comments:

- in relation to Community Planning Partnerships, the question was asked how community groups could be encouraged to become engaged in dialogue and who these groups should contact;
- the Report stated that the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) must identify localities within its area that experience poorer outcomes and disadvantage but it was queried what input Councillors had on identifying specific smaller areas within their wards;
- how would the Community, Learning and Development Strategy develop and how could community involvement be encouraged;
- a request was made for an internet link to the Highland Community Learning and Development Plan to be circulated to Members;
- feedback from the CPP meeting on 2 February 2016 was provided; and
- To get the right links between the Local Committee and new community planning arrangements to be established Members needed to be more proactive and the Chair encouraged all Members to bring an item to their ward meetings on how they might want to engage with community planning partners going forward and the Chair or Vice Chair would attend.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the new powers devolved to the Committee and the planned further devolution of powers subject to Council approval in March 2016, and that further changes are likely during 2016;
- ii. **NOTED** the work underway with partners to establish community planning arrangements and the up-date from the CPP meeting on 2 February 2016; and
- iii. **AGREED** that copies of the Highland Community Learning and Development Plan would be circulated to Members of the Committee.

Item 6 was taken after Item 7 at the meeting.

6. Webcasting Options Roghainnean Craoladh-lìn

There had been circulated Report No RC/002/16 by the Head of Revenues and Business Support seeking a decision on whether the Ross and Cromarty Committee meetings should be webcast and, if so, the funding source/s of the additional costs that webcasting would incur.

In discussion, Members suggested that the webcasting be withdrawn from the Ross and Cromarty Committee as the service demand did not justify the expenditure and given the financial climate within which the Council was operating.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the current service demand for webcasting; and
- ii. **AGREED** that meetings of the Ross and Cromarty Committee should not be webcast as the service demand did not justify the expenditure and given the financial climate within which the Council was operating.

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

There had been circulated Report No RC/003/16 by the Area Commander for Police which updated Members on progress with reference to the local priorities within the Highland 2014-2017 Policing Plan.

The Inspector informed the Committee that he had recently met with the new recently appointed Chief Constable, Mr Gormley. Mr Gormley was keen to maintain community relations and, as former Chief Constable of Norfolk Constabulary, he was very experienced in policing both urban and rural areas.

Members' comments included the following:

- the Area Commander had agreed at a previous meeting of the Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area Committee to include the figures for Rural Crime, including wildlife crime and theft from farms, in the six monthly reports and a request was made that these be brought to the next meeting of the Ross and Cromarty Committee;
- the figures in the Report stated that four break-ins had occurred in Wester Ross, Skye and Lochalsh in the period. Confirmation of this figure was sought as Members understood four break-ins had occurred in one night and knew of another two in the same area;
- the vandalism figures in the report for the Cromarty Firth area were very high and it was suggested that there could be a link between these figures and poverty and deprivation in the areas. It was requested that this be looked at as part of the Localism agenda;
- Confirmation was sought that the CCTV cameras were in operation as these were vital for gathering evidence in relation to crimes in the areas;
- a breakdown of the figures for drug and alcohol misuse in Easter Ross was sought;
- Clarification was sought if notices to remove cars could be put on cars when they were on private land or if the police were limited to cars on the public road; and
- there had been a worrying increase in vandalism figures in all wards and the measures taken to address these were sought.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the progress report and updates in relation to the four priorities - Road Safety; Alcohol and Drugs Abuse/Misuse; Antisocial Behaviour; and Dishonesty;
- ii. **AGREED** the inclusion of Rural Crime, including wildlife crime and theft from farms, be included in the six monthly reports;

- iii. **AGREED** further clarification be sought on the figures relating to the number of thefts by housebreaking in Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh;
- iv. **AGREED** the link between vandalism and areas of multiple deprivation in the Cromarty Firth area be looked at as part of the Localism agenda; and
- v. **AGREED** to investigate the possibility of providing a break-down of figures in relation to drug and alcohol misuse in Easter Ross.

8. West Highlands and Islands Local Development Plan Main Issues

Prìomh Chùisean Plana Leasachaidh Ionadail na Gàidhealtachd an Iar is nan Eilean

There had been circulated Report No RC/004/16 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure setting out the content of the Main Issues Report for the West Highlands and Islands Local Development Plan.

Members' comments included the following:

- It was suggested that the consultation period commence after the Easter holidays as some Wards had a considerable number of community councils and it would take some time to consult with them; the consultations so far had been excellent. This had included school participation from three high schools with plans from these schools for their villages and responses having been sent to the schools to show how some of these village plans had been incorporated into the Development Plan; telephoning round each community council prior to workshops in their areas; Member consultation; and a card had been sent through every door notifying people of the plan;
- neighbour notifications should be in plain English; and
- the official Proposed Development Plan had the wording set by the government but this initial plan did not have set wording and would be written in plain English.;

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** that the Main Issues Report had been shaped by a series of appraisals, suggestions and discussions outlined in paragraphs 1.3 and 2.1 of the report;
- ii. **APPROVED** the Main Issues Report, accepting that a number of minor presentational and typographical changes would be made prior to publication; and
- iii. **AGREED** that the Main Issues Report be subject to a 10 week consultation period, starting after the Easter holidays. Publicity, including the use of social media, would advertise the opportunity for comment and attendance at any of a series of drop-in exhibitions/workshops to be held across the Plan area. Immediate neighbours of all sites specifically identified within the Plan would be notified of the consultation

9. Education Scotland Report Sgrùdaidhean le Foghlam Alba

There had been circulated Report No RC/005/16 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided details of Education Scotland's inspection of Park Primary School and Nursery Class in Invergordon for Members' scrutiny and monitoring.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the report on Education Scotland's engagement with Park Primary School and Nursery; and
- ii. **AGREED** that the Committee write to Park Primary School and Nursery commending them for their achievements and excellent Education Reports.

10. Street Naming – New Housing Developments
Ainmeachadh Sràide - Leasachaidhean Ùra Taigheadais ann Drochaid Sguideil, Alanais agus Baile Dhubhthaich

Declaration of Interest

Mrs J Barclay declared a non-financial interest in this item as a suggested name for one of the roads involved her late husband and left the meeting during this item.

There had been circulated Report No RC/006/16 and RC/007/16 by the Head of Policy and Reform concerning the creation of addresses, following consultation with the respective Community Councils and local Members, for new housing developments at Reraig, Balmacara as Grant Road, and within the new development of 20 properties at Ness Gap, Fortrose.

Members' comments in relation to the Fortrose development included the following:

- Mr Barclay had promoted Alexander "Attie" Matheson as a local boy who hadn't forgotten his roots. He had employed several people in the area and also sponsored various groups in the community;
- Mr Barclay had been a dedicated councillor who had cared about his community; and
- it was for communities to name their own streets and this right should be respected.

Members then voted for two out of four street names, and votes were as follows:

Barclay Drive - 12 votes; Matheson Drive - 12 votes; Dolphin Drive – 1 and Fort George Walk -1 vote.

The Committee therefore:

- i. **HOMOLOGATED** the naming of the road in Reraig, Balmacara as Grant Road; and
- ii. **APPROVED** the naming of the two new streets in Ness Gap, Fortrose as Barclay Drive and Matheson Drive

11. Common Good Funds
Maoin Maith Choitichinn

There had been circulated Reports Nos RC/008/16 – RC/012/16 by the Head of Policy and Reform which provided information on the following Common Good Funds:-

- a. Cromarty Common Good Fund RC/008/16
- b. Dingwall Common Good Fund RC/009/16
- c. Fortrose and Rosemarkie Common Good Fund RC/010/16
- d. Invergordon Common Good Fund RC/011/16
- e. Tain Common Good Fund RC/012/16

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the updated information provided in relation to each Fund;
- ii. **AGREED** to delegate authority to officers to accept the highest bids received for the grazing lets in the Tain Common Good Fund; and
- iii. **APPROVED** the Fund budgets for 2016/17 shown in Appendix 2 of each report.

12. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes of the Skye, Ross and Cromarty Area Committee held on 18 November 2015 which had been approved by the Council on 17 December 2015.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, congratulated Ross County Football Club on their achievement in reaching the Scottish Football League Cup Final.

The meeting ended at 12.50 pm.