

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Communities and Partnerships Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 9 February 2017 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr H Fraser	Mr H Morrison
Mr G Ross	Mr M Reiss
Miss J Campbell	Mr I Renwick
Dr J Davis	Mr G Rimell
Mr G Farlow (substitute)	Ms T Robertson
Mr L Fraser	Mr R Saxon
Mr R Laird	Dr A Sinclair
Mrs D MacKay	Mrs J Slater
Mr D Mackay	Ms M Smith
Mrs A MacLean	

Non-Members also present:-

Mrs J Barclay	Mr D Millar
Mrs M Davidson	Mr J Stone
Mr R Greene	

Officials in attendance:

Mr S Barron, Chief Executive
Ms A Clark, Acting Head of Policy, Chief Executive's Office
Mr D Sutherland, Elections Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Ms R Mackinnon, Equal Opportunities Officer, Chief Executive's Office
Mr M MacDonald, HR Manager, Corporate Development Service
Mr D Greig, Policy Co-ordinator, Chief Executive's Office
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator, Corporate Development Service
Mr S Taylor, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service
Miss J Green, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

Also in attendance:

Mr C Gough, T/Superintendent for Partnerships, Police Scotland
Mr J MacDonald, Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Mr L Ramsay, Assistant Chief Officer, Director of Response and Resilience, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Mr T Hughes, Area Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Mr P Watters, Chair, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board
Mr R Iffla, Board Member, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board
Mr G MacLeod, Head of Ambulance Services Highland, Scottish Ambulance 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

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, the Chairman confirmed that this would be the last meeting of the Committee in the current term of the Council and thanked the members of the Committee for their contributions and also officers for their work and support to the Committee.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Liesgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr A Baxter, Mr N Donald, Mrs L MacDonald and Mrs M Paterson.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

The Committee **NOTED** the following declarations of interest:-

Item 3 – Mrs A MacLean (both non-financial)

Item 8 – Dr J Davies and Mrs A MacLean (both non-financial)

Item 9 – Mr G Farlow, Mr R Laird, Mr G Ross and Dr A Sinclair (all non-financial)

Equalities

Co-ionannachdan

3. Equalities Outcomes Review Ath-sgrùdadh Thoraidhean Co-ionannachd

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 CP/01/17 by the Acting Head of Policy which provided information on the review of the Council's equality outcomes in line with the Council's specific equality duties. The outcomes also incorporated duties on the Education Authority and Licensing Board.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the Vice Chairman of the Committee advised that he had attended a meeting with the Equal Opportunities Officer, Acting Head of Policy, HIE and NHS Highland which had been an incredibly valuable experience and the work of the Equal Opportunities Officer to reduce the number of equality outcomes and in producing the report was commended;
- in terms of working with local partners and community planning, information was sought, and received, on how the equality outcomes were related to or could better relate to Local Output Improvement Plans/Locality Plans;
- the Commission stressed that equality outcomes were not outputs and whilst the report detailed a good list of outcomes it was important these could be measured and reported back to ensure they were being achieved;
- concern was expressed that small groups of people in fragile and sparsely populated areas were suffering inequalities and an update was sought on how the Council was addressing the problems associated with sparsity in population;

- in relation to the proposed equality outcome six, children and young people will benefit from improved access to mental health services and support, there was a need for specific actions to target the transition between Council run services for young people and NHS adult care to ensure that children were not overlooked;
- in relation to the proposed equality outcome eight, increase the number of young people with protected characteristics leaving school moving into positive and sustained destinations, which focused on females, it was important to also give consideration to other protected characteristics including disability and poverty;
- one of the main concerns of the Mid-Ross Community Partnership was how to engage with harder to reach groups. In this regard, information was sought on the progress of other Community Partnerships and what groups they had interacted with;
- an example was provided of how working together with community partners and sharing information could improve inequalities for young carers but, despite a willingness among partners to share information, there was concern that it was not always possible; and
- in relation to LGBT and transgender issues, Women's Aid were setting up a policy to support survivors of domestic abuse and had begun discussions with the Council.

Following discussion, the Committee **NOTED** the report and **AGREED** the proposed set of equality outcomes for 2017 – 2021.

4. Equalities Outcomes 2017 Progress Report Adhartas Thoraidhean Co-ionannachd

There had been circulated Report No CP/02/17 by the Acting Head of Policy which provided information on the progress towards achieving the Council's current equality outcomes 2013 – 2017.

During discussion, the hard work being undertaken in Highland to promote equality despite it was highlighted that attitudes towards prejudice continued to improve in the Highlands and it was reassuring that tolerance had been built, and continued to grow, despite wider political UK and global issues.

During discussion, it was highlighted that, despite wider UK and global political issues, tolerances had been built and attitudes towards prejudice continued to improve in the Highlands which was reassuring.

The Committee **NOTED** the report and progress with the Equality Outcomes 2013-2017.

5. Mainstreaming Equality 2015-17 Aithisg Àbhaisteachadh Cho-ionannachdan

There had been circulated Report No CP/03/17 by the Acting Head of Policy which outlined to Members the requirements on the Council, the Education Authority and the Licensing Board to provide information on how equality was built into the day to day activities of the three bodies in line with the Council's specific equality duties.

During discussion, Members sought additional consideration for people who were digitally excluded and for people who used sign language whilst recognising the success of the Deaf Studies Unit at Dingwall Academy in achieving a Life Long Learning Award.

The Committee **NOTED** the Mainstreaming Report circulated separately at Booklet A.

6. Employment Duties – Equal Pay Statement and Gender Pay Gap
Dleastanasan Cosnaidh – Aithris air Pàigheadh Co-ionann agus Beàrn Pàighidh a rèir Gnè

There had been circulated Report No CP/04/17 by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development which set out an Equal Pay Statement for the Highland Council and provided key information on the gender pay gap.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the first major commitment the Council made to the principle of equal pay and the elimination of any gender bias in its pay systems was on 22 August 2007 when the Resources Committee agreed the first Equal Pay Statement. It was welcomed that since then the Council had the best performance compared to other Local Authorities in relation to equal pay. However, caution was expressed that performance needed to be maintained and it was important to correct past mistakes. In this regard, it was requested that all outstanding equal pay claims were concluded in the next financial year;
- the online learning resource being created for female employees interested in preparing for supervisory and management roles should be targeted at all employees at every level including men;
- in recognising the difficulties of employees returning to work following maternity or paternity leave it was requested that the Equal Pay Statement also include reference to support and training for both women and men returning to work;
- in relation to the full time pay gap trend in Appendix 2 to the report, an explanation was sought, and received, that the a negative figure was in favour of female employees and a positive figure was in favour of male employees;
- secondments and a mentoring scheme were worthwhile activities for employee development and should be encouraged; and
- North West Highlands Geopark operated a successful ‘keeping in touch’ scheme to help employees return to work.

The Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the Equal Pay Statement set out in Appendix 1 to the report subject to the inclusion of reference to support and training for both women and men returning to work;
- ii. **NOTED** improvements in relation to the gender pay gaps; and
- iii. **AGREED** to investigate expanding the Women in Management Programme for all employees.

7. Highland Local Police Area – Hate Crime and Hate Incidents
Eucoirean Gràin – Freagairtean Suirbhidh agus Staitistig Poileis

There had been circulated Report No CP/05/17 by the Divisional Commander for Police which provided an update on the partnership approach to address Hate Crime in Highland. The report included information on the most recent Police Scotland statistics and an update on related partnership activities.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the Police Service was commended for the sensitive and compassionate manner in which concerns of constituents in the Inverness Central Ward had been handled which was greatly appreciated by the victims and Local Members;
- it was unfortunate that a lot of hate incidents relating to race, religion and disabilities were not reported which affected the statistics. In this regard, clarification was sought on how a hate crime was defined and whether or not the Sheriff considered a hate crime to be more serious;
- an individual using prejudicial words but claiming to not have a problem with a particular group of people could be difficult to prove as a hate crime;
- hate crime had been witnessed in relation to football matches however the statistics reported were low and in response it was explained that a lot of the incidents came from the stadium which relied on reports from other supporters or stewards so that the Police could put resources in place to gather information on the perpetrators. Furthermore the Police were involved in ongoing discussions regarding a review of hate crime in football;
- it was queried whether the police needed different resources in place in Highland and whether Highland had a role to inform central management in Police Scotland about the different circumstances in Highland due to a large geographical area and relatively small population;
- in relation to tackling prejudice based bullying in schools, it was a concern that 5% of pupils in one school had experienced bullying because of an Additional Support Need (ASN) and the average proportion of ASN pupils was also 5% which was being addressed by the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee; and
- some Eastern Europeans living in Highland felt unable to report issues to the Council. In this regard, it was stressed that the Highlands were welcoming to everyone and it was important to stand up and stop bullying and prejudice.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. information on hate crime statistics and survey responses;
- ii. activities undertaken over the last year to address hate crime in Highland, including partnership activities; and
- iii. proposed activities to address hate crime in Highland for the coming year.

8. Highland Violence Against Women Partnership Group – Minutes Buidheann Ro-innleachd Fòirneart An Aghaidh Bhoireannach – Geàrr- Chunntas

Declarations of Interest: Dr J Davies and Mrs A MacLean declared non-financial interests in this item as Directors of Inverness Women’s Aid and Ross-shire Women’s Aid respectively 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.

There had been circulated for noting Minutes of Meeting of the Highland Violence Against Women Strategy Group held on 20 September 2016, which were approved by the Partnership Group on 20 December 2016, which were **NOTED**.

In relation to the Highland Violence Against Women Partnership Group, assurance was sought and received that there would be a replacement for Ms F Palin, who had retired from the Highland Council, to attend meetings.

Community Empowerment and Localism
Ughdarrachadh Coimhearsnachd agus Ionadaileachd

9. Review of Polling Places
Ath-sgrùdadh air Àiteachan Bhòtaidh

Declarations of Interest: the following Members declared non-financial interests in this item in relation to polling places 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:-

Mr G Farlow – as Chair of the North West Highland Geopark Ltd

Mr R Laird – as Chair of the James Cameron Community Centre Service Review Group, a Director of the Spectrum Centre Board of Management and having attended meetings of the Merkinch Community Centre Association Management Committee

Mr G Ross – as a Board Member of the James Cameron Community Centre Service Review Group

Dr A Sinclair – as Chair of Kyle Village Hall

There had been circulated Report No CP/06/17 dated by the Chief Executive which advised Members of the interim review of the current Scheme of Polling Places. Responses received during the second stage of the consultative process were set out in Appendix 1 along with the final recommendations from the Returning Officer for a new Polling Scheme to come into effect for the Election to Highland Council on the 4 May 2017 which formed Appendix 2.

During a summary of the report, the Elections Manager advised of a number of additional changes to the list of Polling Stations following late representations from some Ward Members which were to retain the Boat of Garten Hall instead of Deshar Primary School, Helmsdale Community Centre instead of Helmsdale Primary School and also to include Dornoch Library instead of Dornoch Primary School.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- in relation to concern about the distances elderly folk had to travel to their polling place, confirmation was sought, and received, that the Council promoted postal voting applicable to all on demand;
- it was felt that Castletown Primary School was not very central and that the Village Hall should be used as a polling place instead;
- there was no issue with the concept of reviewing the polling places because it was understood that savings needed to be made but there was concern expressed with the process in which it was undertaken, particularly that several halls had been informed of the changes on social media and therefore should be given an apology when writing to confirm cancellation of the booking of the premises;
- it was queried whether premises which were no longer required would be compensated for storing polling booths and also where the polling booths would be stored in future and how they would be moved;
- in response to some of the representations made detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, it was clarified that an in-service day would be held where Primary Schools were being used as polling places so that children's education would not be disrupted;

- there had been confusion regarding polling places that were initially proposed and were different to the final proposals. In this regard, it was important to ensure that new polling places were well publicised so the electorate knew where to go;
- when the ownership of Council assets were transferred to community groups the continuing use of these premises for polling station and education purposes should be taken into consideration. In this regard, it was queried as to what effort had been made to check the leases to ensure they could be used as polling stations;
- Officers and the Chief Executive were urged to be careful about the process and how it was administered because many people felt the decision had already been made by Officers and not by Councillors and therefore did not feel it was worth responding to the consultation;
- there was a typographical error in Appendix 1 to the report where Rogart had been listed again next to representation made by Gary Sutherland who was referring to Kinlochbervie;
- concern was expressed regarding access to Durness Primary School because the car park was at the front but the entrance was at the back where there was no car parking;
- confirmation was sought, and received, that the changes to polling places was not permanent and that there would be an opportunity for further review after the Local Government elections in May 2017;
- concern was expressed that a lot of Community Councils in rural areas did not meet in December 2016 or January 2017 due to the weather so would have missed the consultation period of the first stage which ran from 12 December 2016 until 6 January 2017;
- when approving the new Polling Scheme, it was worth considering that there would be a review of the performance of the new Polling Scheme after the election which was a sensible approach to take;
- appreciation was expressed to the Elections Manager for his help to consider alternative options with East Sutherland and Edderton Ward Members which were acceptable to the communities;
- there were outstanding issues with the polling station in Durness which required further discussion between Local Members and the Elections Manager;
- it was highlighted that Community Council Members were volunteers; and
- Ward Managers and Ward Members had been well informed about the review of polling places.

The Committee **NOTED** the representations made in conjunction with the proposed Polling Scheme and **APPROVED** the new Polling Scheme for the May 2017 Highland Council Election as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report subject to the retention of the following Polling Stations Boat of Garten Hall, Helmsdale Community Centre, and Dornoch Library as well as further discussion with Local Members regarding the Polling Station in Durness.

10. Community Planning Board Minutes Geàrr-chunntas Bòrd an Dealbhaidh Choimhearsnachd

There had been circulated for noting Minutes of Meeting of the Community Planning Board held on 7 October 2016, which were approved by the Board on 16 December 2016, which were **NOTED**.

Community Safety
Sàbhailteachd Coimhearsnachd

11. Fire Control Rooms Update
Cunntas às Ùr mu Sheòmraichean Smachd Smàlaidh

Mr P Watters, Chair of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Board provided an introduction to the current position of Fire Control Rooms during which he stressed that it was about restructuring rather than changing the way services were delivered which would continue to be delivered locally within communities. Furthermore, he confirmed that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's intention was to provide safe communities for the people of Scotland and would maintain the high level of attainment, commitment and dedication to communities which had been undertaken previously by the Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service.

Thereafter, an update was provided by Assistant Chief Officer Lewis Ramsay, Director of Response and Resilience, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service on the migration of Inverness Operations Control to Dundee Operations Control during which he explained that since operations had transferred to Dundee about 2,500 out of 4,000 calls handled involved communities in the Highlands and Islands and had been dealt with successfully covering a range of issues including the winter storms. In addressing claims made in the press and media, he expressed his personal opinion that the majority of those claims were baseless and showed a lack of consideration for staff operating on the frontline and in this regard he confirmed that work was being undertaken to support staff through the period of change. Furthermore, he advised that since migration the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service had improved the gazetteer inherited from the former Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service, which had increased the known addresses in the area from 60,000 to over 200,000. He also provided an update on the progress of the Command and Control Futures Project, designed to provide a single modern mobilising solution for Scotland, which was currently out to tender with the intention to award a contract during Summer 2017 before commencing the roll-out of a new system across Scotland. In conclusion, the Assistant Chief Officer paid tribute on behalf of the Chair and other Board Members present to the dedication of colleagues involved in the migration of operations from Inverness to Dundee.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the Leader of the Council expressed appreciation to the representatives of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service for attending the meeting because it was necessary to hear the assurances that they provided;
- it was felt that the aspiration to have a joint call centre with the other emergency services was never taken seriously which could have achieved the same outcomes;
- when the Fire and Rescue Service were on strike and the control of operations transferred to the Police Service Control Room, it only experienced a 1% increase in the number of calls which showed that a joint call centre anywhere in Scotland could be advantageous;
- there was no doubt that the claims made in the press and media were baseless and sympathy was expressed for the staff in Dundee trying to do their best. However there was a need for further information in future on performance indicators to provide assurance that the service was operating safely and so that this assurance could be shared with the public with confidence;

- concern was expressed that the Community Response Unit (CRU) was not being called out to a number of incidents in Highland and it was important to recognise the differences between Highland and the Central Belt and the importance of community resilience so that there was flexibility in the response to incidents;
- an update was sought on the progress of the combined gazetteer for the three emergency services;
- there were fire alarms in various public toilets which were not connected to the Fire Control Room and relied on members of the public to report any incidents. In response, it was explained that there was no requirement by law to install fire alarms in public toilets and that it was the choice and responsibility of the local authority and therefore would not receive an automatic response from the Fire Service;
- concern was expressed in relation to contingencies to deal with a catastrophic failure of the new system being installed across Scotland;
- 2,500 out of 4,000 calls handled by Dundee Operations Control involving communities in the Highlands and Islands could represent a business case in terms of statistics for having a Control Room in Highland and statistics were sought on the number of calls handled for other areas prior to migration;
- concern was expressed in relation to a call handled by Dundee Operations Control from Thurso in which they had the wrong address;
- further information was sought including a summary of the reported incidents, how they were investigated, the outcome of the investigation and what action was taken;
- the hugely successful marketing of the North Coast 500 meant that there would be an increase in the volume of traffic so it was important to be assured that there were processes in place to deal with any accidents and that performance could be measured; and
- the press and media also provided benefits such as supporting the successful recruitment campaign.

The Committee **NOTED** the update and **AGREED** a report be provided on:-

- i. the Fire Control Room migration, including information on individual incident investigations, their outcomes and the action taken;
- ii. future performance information; and
- iii. the progress of a combined gazetteer for the three emergency services.

12. Presentation – Mountain Rescue Team Taisbeanadh – Sgioba Teasairginn Bheann

The Committee **NOTED** that this item had been withdrawn.

13. Performance Against the Highland Local Policing Plan 2014-2017 Coileanadh mu Choinneamh Plana Obair-phoilis Ionadail na Gàidhealtachd 2014-2017

There had been circulated Report No CP/07/17 by the Divisional Commander for Police which provided an update on the progress with reference to the objectives outlined in the Highland Local Policing Plan 2014-2017.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- in welcoming the development of the new Local Policing Plan, it was highlighted that the Plan proposed a change in focus from a target based system to crime

education and that engagement with people from a young age through learning and education could be more effective in preventing crime;

- reassurance was sought, and received, regarding an increase in detections for speeding and that officers would continue to be pro-active in their responses to complaints;
- a request was made for further information on the number of youth/drug Support workshops taking place and what feedback from attendees had been received;
- it was confirmed that the target to increase the use of anti-social behaviour warnings in relation to vehicles could be applied to cars with noisy exhausts and on that basis a request was made for offenders of this behaviour to be pursued;
- early intervention to reduce anti-social behaviour in Caithness through multi-agency partnership working in Caithness was highlighted;
- a request was made for information on whether it was envisioned that Ward Based Policing Plans would be included within the new Local Policing Plan;
- in welcoming the Service's presence on social media, it was highlighted that by posting photos from holidays on social media, people could unwittingly be giving criminals an indication that their home was empty;
- following comment regarding the availability of new Psychoactive Substances on the internet, information was provided on the methods used by the Service to intercept packages containing drugs, during which the postal service's efforts to raise awareness to the Service of suspicious packages was recognised;
- the high number of licensed property checks in North Highland and the positive outcomes in 85% of cases was commended;
- the importance of having an effective gazetteer facility within Police Control Rooms following the closure of the Inverness Control Room was emphasised. In response, the Chair confirmed that a meeting would shortly be arranged between himself, the Service and the Chairs of the Islands local authority scrutiny committees to discuss concerns raised within the recent review into call handling regarding the gazetteer facility in Police Control Rooms; and
- in commending the Road Traffic Workshop recently held for Members, the opportunity for a second workshop for Members who were unable to attend the first was suggested.

The Committee scrutinised and **NOTED** the performance report against Highland Policing Plan Objectives from April to December 2016.

14. Scottish Police Authority Annual Review of Policing 2016/17 Ath-sgrùdadh Bliadhna Obair-phoilis Ùghdarras Poilis na h-Alba 2016/17

There had been circulated Report No CP/08/17 by the Acting Head of Policy which provided a draft response to the Scottish Police Authority's (SPA) annual review of policing.

The Committee **AGREED** the final response as set out in Section 2 of the Report for submission to the Scottish Police Authority.

15. Scottish Ambulance Service Report Aithisg Seirbheis Charbadan-eiridinn na h-Alba

There had been circulated performance report by the Scottish Ambulance Service for the Highland area for the period from April 2016 to January 2017.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- concern was expressed regarding the procedure for taking patients sectioned under the Mental Health Act to a place of safety in a medical emergency as ambulances currently had to pick up escorts prior to transferring the patient and it was suggested that a risk based approach would help reduce the amount of time an ambulance was out of service;
- in highlighting the 15 vacancies within A&E, concern was expressed regarding the difficulty in filling these posts;
- it was highlighted that some taxi drivers had refused to take patients with bottled oxygen tanks and that whilst the patients were happy to use the ambulance in this circumstance, this could increase the length of time required to attend appointments;
- concern was expressed that some users who were reliant on the Patient Transfer Service (PTS) to get to appointments had experienced difficulty getting home on occasions when they had an appointment in the late afternoon;
- it was highlighted that within Skye, liaison had commenced between consultants from Raigmore, A&E departments and general surgeries to ensure that appointments were fixed to arrive in the morning in order for patients in rural areas to be given ample time to travel home;
- it was suggested that Members should advise area health managers of their concerns regarding the scheduling of appointments for people travelling long distances; and
- concern was expressed regarding an increase in cancellations of scheduled care journeys and confirmation was sought, and received, that patients would be guaranteed an appointment on the third occasion if their previous two journeys had been cancelled.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

**16. Fire and Rescue Service Quarterly Performance Report for Quarter 3 2016/17
Aithisg Dèanadais Ràitheil na Seirbheis Smàlaidh agus Teasairginn airson Ràith
3 2016/17**

There had been circulated Report No CP/09/17 by the Local Senior Officer for Fire and Rescue, together with accompanying quarterly performance report (QPR), which provided detail on Fire and Rescue Service performance across a range of Intervention, Prevention and Protection activities for Quarter 3, 2016/17.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- the Chair, on behalf of the Committee expressed his condolences to the family and surrounding community of a gentleman who recently lost his life as a result of an accidental dwelling fire and emphasised the importance of multi-agency partnership working to ensure preventative measures were in place to protect vulnerable people in communities;
- disappointment was expressed regarding an increase in the number of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) and the effect this had on the availability of crews to deal with genuine incidents;
- in acknowledging the measures taken by the Service to address UFAS, it was suggested that individuals could help to prevent UFAS by identifying where alarms were positioned and changing habits such as moving a kettle or toaster to a different location;

- it was highlighted that mechanical faults on fire alarms were a common cause of UFAS and that it was the responsibility of the duty holder or person in residence to act diligently and ensure any mechanical faults were eliminated;
- in highlighting the high figures reported within Inverness Central, a request was made for information as to whether there were any common trends with regards to UFAS, particularly within social housing and flatted buildings, and that if there were any issues relating specifically to Inverness Central that the Local Senior Officer contact Ward Members with details of these so that representations could be made to the relevant housing associations;
- the reassurance provided by the Local Senior Officer regarding the migration of Inverness Operations Control to Dundee was welcomed;
- gratitude was expressed to the Local Senior Officer and his officers for the work undertaken to enable the Lochinver fire appliance to become operational from February 2017; and
- following a request for information, it was confirmed that the previous system of call signs for appliances within the Highlands and Islands had changed to a single system for the whole of the North area following the implementation of a National Call Signs system which contained specific criteria in relation to the requirement for a standardised call sign system. It was also confirmed that a national payroll system had recently been implemented.

The Committee scrutinised and **NOTED** the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service delivery and performance contained within the Report and accompanying QPR for Quarter 3, 2016/17.

17. Review of Local Fire Plan 2014-2017 and Development of New Local Fire Plan 2017-2020
Ath-sgrùdadh air Plana Ionadail Smàlaidh 2014-2017 agus Leasachadh Plana Ionadail Smàlaidh Ùr 2017-2020

There had been circulated Report No CP/10/17 by the Local Senior Officer for Fire and Rescue which set out the proposals for review of the current Local Fire Plan for Highland 2014-2017 as well as the timeline for development of the new Local Fire Plan for Highland 2017-2020

The Report also provided a link to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service consultation hub 'Citizen Space' where Members' views on the success and appropriateness of the current Local Fire Plan could be presented in an online survey. The online survey could be accessed via the following link:

<https://firescotland.citizenspace.com/planning-and-performance/local-plan-review>

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- the Chair confirmed that the link to the online survey would be circulated to Community Councils for their responses; and
- with regard to the proposal to build an extension and develop a family centre at Dingwall Community Fire Station, it was confirmed that a draft business case would shortly be submitted to senior management for consideration and that Members would be kept updated on the progress of this.

The Committee **NOTED** the proposals for the current Local Fire Plan review and development of the new Local Fire Plan.

18. Public Performance Survey 2016: Responses to Questions on Community Safety
Suirbhídh Coileanadh Poblach 2016: Freagairtean do Cheistean mu Shábhailteachd Phoblach

There had been circulated Report No CP/11/17 by the Acting Head of Policy which provided a summary of the responses from the Citizens' Panel on questions about attitudes to community safety in the 2016 Public Performance and Attitudes Survey.

During discussion, Members made the following comments:-

- whilst the overall survey figures showed high confidence levels with regard to community safety, concern was expressed that the methodology used to collate the figures did not reflect the high level of concern raised within some wards to particular categories contained within the survey; and
- the view was expressed that terrorism should be considered a greater concern than the 76% figure of respondents to the survey who did not consider it a concern in the Highlands.

The Committee **NOTED** that:-

- i. the survey showed 96.7% of respondents rated areas within 15 minutes' walk of their home as either "very" or "fairly safe";
- ii. the top concerns amongst respondents were road safety, alcohol abuse, drug misuse and antisocial behaviour; and
- iii. this feedback from the public was one source of evidence in agreeing and reviewing our community safety priorities with partners.

The meeting concluded at 4.00 pm.