

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Nairnshire Committee** held in the Chamber, Lethen Hall, Auldearn on Wednesday 11 September 2019 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr L Fraser
Mr T Heggie

Mrs L MacDonald
Mr P Saggars

In attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Mr M MacLeod, Council Redesign Lead, Chief Executive's Office
Mr R Porteous, Roads Operations Manager - LNBS, Community Services
Mr R MacLeod, Principal Housing Officer, Community Services
Mr J Henderson, Housing Investment Officer, Community Services
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

Also in attendance:

Mr G Asher, Lord Lieutenant (Item 3)
Area Inspector V Tough, Police Scotland (Item 4)

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 T Heggie in the Chair

Preliminaries

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, the Chair advised that the press would be allowed to record the meeting since it was a committee meeting held in public and was not webcast.

The Chair also reported that the Ward Manager, Liz Cowie, was currently on secondment and the Committee wished her well with this career opportunity and expressed their appreciation for her support. Although the interim arrangements were welcome, the need for a formal replacement as soon as possible was emphasised.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

Item 9 – Mr L Fraser (non-financial)

3. **Community Awards for Nairnshire** **Duaisean Coimhearsnachd airson Siorrachd Inbhir Narann**

There was a presentation by the Lord Lieutenant Mr George Asher, on the introduction of Community Awards for Nairnshire during which he advised that the scheme had been created to recognise the people and groups making a positive contribution to the quality of lives in the local community and carrying out charitable work in Nairnshire. He advised that an Awards Nomination Form had been developed, copies of which were tabled at the meeting, and nominees were invited based on six key categories, namely Arts/Music, Community, Enterprise, Environment, Sports and Young People. Forms would be available from 12 September 2019 from the Nairn Service Point. Mr Asher also expressed his appreciation to the Ward Manager for her support in developing the Awards.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- The Committee welcomed the introduction of the Community Awards for Nairnshire and emphasised the importance of recognising volunteers that gave their time to enhancing and enriching the local community;
- It was felt that holding the Awards ceremony in January was an appropriate time of year and it was confirmed that it was intended that this would be an annual event;
- In order to improve accessibility, it was recommended that the Nomination Forms should be available online to download; and
- It was requested that a press release should be issued on the Community Awards for Nairnshire and that social media should also be used to promote the scheme.

The Committee **NOTED** the presentation and **AGREED** that, if within Council Policy to do so, officers would use reasonable endeavours to arrange for the:-

- i. Awards Nominations Forms for Nairnshire to be made available for download from the Council website; and
- ii. a press release to be issued on the launch of the Nairnshire Community Awards scheme and for it to be further promoted via social media.

4. **Police Scotland Area Performance Report** **Poileas Alba – Geàrr-chunntas Dèanadais Sgìreil**

There had been circulated Report No N/**13**/19 dated 30 August 2019 by the South Highland Area Commander.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- Further information was sought and provided on digitally enabled policing and the mobile devices that would be utilised. With regard to this, it was clarified that the new technology would not include recording devices such as body cameras;

- Confirmation was provided that arrangements had been put in place to ensure Police Scotland representation and reporting at local community council meetings. This was welcomed and it was suggested that should attendance not be possible, that a summary of local community issues should be submitted to the meeting;
- It was queried whether it would be feasible to provide a percentage breakdown of the drink/drugs driving offences and further information was sought and provided on the separate procedures that were followed in processing these offences; and
- It was valuable to have police officers that had knowledge and experience of the local community which further helped to pre-empt crime.

Having thanked Inspector Tough for his report, the Committee **NOTED** the progress made against the objectives set within the Highland and Islands Local Policing Plan 2017-2020 Year 2 and first quarter of Year 3, attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 1 April 2018- 30 June 2019.

5. Annual Area Capital Report Aithisg Bhliadhnaì Chalpa Sgìre

There had been circulated Report No N/**14**/19 dated 9 July 2019 by the Head of Corporate Finance and Commercialism.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- Overall the Committee was content with the level of investment but concern was expressed that the Housing HRA Capital Repairs Environmental works had not yet commenced. It was welcomed that further information on this matter would be reported to the Ward Business Meeting;
- Appreciation was expressed for the high standard of repair works being undertaken at the Court House; and
- At a recent Nairn Academy Parent Council meeting, there was an update on the additional capital improvement works that would be undertaken at the school and this was welcomed.

The Committee **NOTED** the:-

- i. expenditure on each project in this Council area in 2018/19;
- ii. budget for each project in this Council area in 2019/20; and
- iii. cumulative spend for each project in this Council area for 2018/19 and 2019/20 to 30 June 2019.

6. Nairn Common Good Fund – Quarter 1 2019/20 Monitoring Report Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Narann – Aithisg Sgrùdaidh Cairteil 1 2019/20

There had been circulated Report No N/**15**/19 dated 29 August 2019 by the Acting Head of Policy.

During discussion, the Committee commended the project team for their work to date in respect of the Links Development Project. This was a significant project, and although welcome, it was highlighted that once the £100,000 had been utilised the Nairn Common Good Fund would have limited resources available. And whilst the

Council's investments had been tracking well, the Committee was reminded that these values could go down as well as up. It was confirmed that the £15,000 budget for project management costs, some of which had already been utilised, was in addition to the £210,000 that had been estimated for purchasing and fitting the splash pad. The target date for completion of the project of the summer 2020 was also welcomed.

With regard to governance of the of the disposal of an area of Common Good land to the Nairn Sailing Club for use by the Nairn Rowing Club, it was confirmed that all statutory obligations had been followed in line with the requirements of section 104 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. It was further clarified that as part of this process all individual members of the former Nairn River Community Council had been notified and invited to respond to the consultation. However, in order to ensure as wide as engagement as possible, a policy change had been made whereby in future all Nairnshire community councils would be notified with regard to the disposal of any assets from the Nairn Common Good Fund.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the position of the Nairn Common Good Fund (NCGF) at the end of the first quarter;
- ii. **NOTED** the progress of the Links Project Phase 1 and **AGREED** in principle to the allocation of £100,000 from the Common Good Loans Fund account towards this project, subject to the confirmation of other funding and a business case;
- iii. **AGREED** that a full business case be developed and reported to the next meeting of the Nairnshire Committee and that all practicable steps be taken to maximise third party funding opportunities;
- iv. **AGREED** the proposal to dispose of an area of Common Good land to the Nairn Sailing club for use by the Nairn Rowing Club noting the outcome of community consultation and permission having been granted by the Sherriff Court; and
- v. **NOTED** that, if required, a special meeting of the Committee would be scheduled in accordance with Standing Orders to ensure progress of the project continued without any delays.

7. Winter Maintenance Plan for 2019/20 Obair-glèidhidh Geamhraidh 2019/20

There had been circulated Report No N/16/19 dated 22 August 2019 by the Interim Chief Officer Resources (Community Services).

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- Responding to a request, it was confirmed that it was standard practice for school term bus routes to be gritted in advance of the bus using the route. It was suggested that any local incidents that which appeared to contravene this policy should be reported to officers for further investigation; and
- It was confirmed that no routes routinely commenced at 5am and that this was a discretionary option to provide greater flexibility.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Winter Maintenance Plan for the Nairn Area, which is in accordance with report EDI/57/18, and included the priority road map presented in Appendix B.

8. Area Roads & Bridges Progress Report 2018/19 Aithisg Adhartais Rathaidean & Dhrochaidean Sgìreil 2018/19

There had been circulated Report No N/**17**/19 dated 22 August 2019 by the Interim Chief Officer Resources (Community Services).

During discussion concern was expressed at the limited funds available to address the deteriorating condition of both the roads and pavements and the importance of targeting additional income for investment was emphasised.

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

9. Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2019 Coileanadh Taigheadais: 1 Giblean 2019 gu 30 Ògmhios 2019

Declaration of Interest: Mr L Fraser declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Sub-Contractor for the Housing Service in Nairn 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 N/**18**/19 dated 19 August 2019 by the Interim Chief Officer Resources (Community Services).

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- It was clarified that a greater supply of affordable housing accommodation would help to alleviate the increasing trend of homelessness presentations. In view of this, a plea was made for community councils to bear local needs in mind when considering future affordable housing planning applications;
- It was queried whether it would be more cost effective for aids and adaptations structures to be permanent. However, it was further queried whether this would be feasible as it was suggested that there might be a need for adaptations to be temporary to enable structures to be reinstated to their original condition; and
- Further information was sought and provided in regard to the Heating replacements budget of £50,000 for one-off heating failures.

The Committee **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance for the period 1 April to 30 June 2019.

10. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There were circulated and **NOTED** Minutes of Meeting of the Nairnshire Committee held on 12 June 2019, which had been approved by the Council on 27 June 2019.

The meeting concluded at 12 noon.