

The Highland Council
No. 8 2019/2020

Minutes of Special Meeting of the Highland Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday, 22 November 2019 at 10.30 am.

1. Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence
A' Gairm a' Chlàir agus Leisgeulan

Present:

Mr B Boyd	Mr D Macpherson
Mr R Bremner (vc)	Mr R MacWilliam
Mrs C Caddick	Mr J McGillivray (vc)
Mrs I Campbell (excluding item 3.1)	Mr H Morrison
Mr G Cruickshank	Mr M Reiss
Mrs K Currie	Mrs T Robertson
Mrs M Davidson	Mr P Saggars
Mr M Finlayson	Ms M Smith
Mr C Fraser	
Mr R Gale	
Mr J Gordon (excluding item 3.1)	
Mr A Graham	
Mr T Heggie	
Mr B Lobban	
Mr D Louden	
Mr D Mackay	

In Attendance:

Dafydd Jones, Acting Head of Development Management – Highland
Mrs G Pearson, Planner
Ms J Bridge, Senior Engineer
Mrs K Lyons, Principal Solicitor
Alison MacArthur, Administrative Assistant

Mr B Lobban in the Chair

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr G Adam, Mr A Baxter, Mr I Brown, Mr J Bruce, Mrs J Campbell, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Dr I Cockburn, Mrs M Cockburn, Mr J Finlayson, Mr K Gowans, Mr J Gray, Mr A Henderson, Mr A Jarvie, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr R MacDonald, Mr A MacInnes, Mr W Mackay, Mr G Mackenzie, Mrs A MacLean, Mr D MacLeod, Mrs B McAllister, Mr N MacLean, Ms L Munro, Mrs M Paterson, Mr D Rixson, Mrs F Robertson, Mr K Rosie, Mr G Ross, Mr A Sinclair, Ms N Sinclair and Mr B Thompson.

2. Declarations of Interest
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Applications to be Determined Dealbhadh rin Dearbhadh

3.1 Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (19/00374/FUL) (HC/60/19) (HC/51/19)

Location: Land 1000 m SE of Dalchork House, Lairg.

Nature of Development: Erection and operation of a 132 kV substation comprising platform area, control building, associated plant and infrastructure, ancillary facilities, public road improvements to the A836 between the site entrance and the junction with the A838, upgrade of an existing forest track, site compound (half of which will remain permanent for operational purposes) and landscape works (Ward 1 – North, West and Central Sutherland.

Recommendation: Grant.

There had been circulated Report No HC/060/19 and recirculated Report No HC/51/19, by the Acting Head of Development Management - Highland recommending that the Committee grant the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

This item was then taken in accordance with the Hearings Procedure and Mr K Reid, Environmental Project Manager and Ms L Riach, Town Planner representing the applicant attended.

Mr Reid advised that the development was for the erection of a new substation to provide a connection for contracted renewable generation in the area to the electricity transmission network via a proposed new double circuit 132 kV overhead line and underground cable to Loch Buidhe Substation. Following the previous meeting of the Highland Council, Members had been provided with visualisations, drone footage and the movements of HGV vehicles as requested. The drone footage was then presented.

There were no requests for clarification from the Members.

There were no community council representatives present.

Mrs E Armstong, objector, then spoke pointing out to Members the impact of this powerline (application 19/01236/S37, item 3.2 of the agenda) and the highly visible substation in this area.

Mr A Marshall, objector, then spoke expressing his concerns for the safety of residents and the road infrastructure to the north of Lairg. The only road consideration had been for the actual junction point. The road bends outside of Lairg were the most dangerous for road users, cyclists and pedestrians. HGVs would be generated by both projects and the safety concerns in relation to this had not been addressed. He appealed to the Council that a cycle path between Dalchork and Lairg be a condition of the planning permission.

As far as Mr Marshall and Mrs Armstrong were aware no Community Liaison Group had been set up.

The objectors then responded to points of clarification from the Members as follows:

- confirmation that local people did walk the road for shopping and that tourists and cyclists often cycled and walked this route;

- the route of the cycle path was outlined as from Lairg village up to the junction access point to the site that would be created by SSE; and
- the site had been reduced in size and Mr Marshall hoped that, after this, the substation would not be enlarged as a consequence of wind turbine developments.

Members were content with the information supplied. The objectors were content with the hearings procedure.

The applicant was content with the hearings procedure and the hearings procedure was therefore completed.

The Planning Officer then gave a presentation on the application, put forward her recommendation and responded to Members' questions as follows:

- as part of the submission the applicant had looked at the construction traffic and they had noted the request for the cycle path along the A836. The proposals would have a significant impact with the increase of heavy traffic, however this was a temporary impact over a six month period. The cost of constructing a dedicated cycle footway over that distance was significant. Traffic management would be utilised to manage the road i.e. 20 mph speed limit, travelling to and from the site out with school start/finish times.
- the traffic management plan would manage the upkeep of the road, initial photographs would be taken of the road and it would be monitored and any deterioration would have to be made good by the applicant. This was considered proportionate with the development; and
- the site was just over 54 hectares, the landscaping and planting proposed by the applicant was within the red line.

During discussion, comments included the following:

- a considerable amount of mitigation of the development would be secured through condition;
- there had been compromise on both sides;
- concern expressed regarding road safety and the increase in HGV vehicles using the A836.

Mr R Bremner, seconded by Mr D Loudon, **moved** that the application be granted subject to (i) the conditions contained in the report and the supplementary report, (ii) an additional condition securing the formation of a Community Liaison Group (to be chaired by a member of the community local to the application site) at least 2 months prior to the commencement of the development and to include within the Group's remit to explore with the Council's roads engineers and the applicant the provision of a foot/cycleway to improve pedestrian/cyclist safety and mitigate the impact of the increase in HGV traffic movements in the area due to the proposed development, where it is deemed appropriate by those parties, and (iii) to the prior conclusion of an agreement under section 96 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 (if considered necessary by Transport Planning).

Decision

The Council therefore **AGREED** to **GRANT** planning permission subject to the conditions contained in the report and the supplementary report, the additional condition and the agreement (if necessary).

3.2 Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (19/01236/S37) (HC/52/19)
Location: Land 1000 m SE of Dalchork House, Lairg (Ward 1 – North, West and Central Sutherland).
Nature of Development: Lairg to Loch Buidhe 132 kV overhead line.
Recommendation: Raise no objection.

There had been recirculated Report No HC/052/19 by the Acting Head of Development Management - Highland recommending that the Committee grant the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

Decision

The Council **AGREED** to **RAISE NO OBJECTION** subject to the conditions contained in the report.

The meeting ended at 12.45 pm.

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee (Comataidh an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair)** held in the Chamber, Tigh na Sgìre, Park Lane, Portree on **Monday, 2 December, 2019 at 10.30 am.**

Present:

Mr J Finlayson
Mr J Gordon

Mr R MacDonald

In attendance:

Mr M MacLeod, Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure and Environment
Mr W MacKinnon, Ward Manager
Mr M Colliar, Station Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Mr G MacDonald, Senior Engineer (Ross, Skye & Lochaber)
Mr J Holden, Housing Manager (North)
Ms J Bruce, Principal Housing Officer
Mr T Stott, Principal Planner
Mr D Chisholm, Planner (Development Plans)
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant

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 J Gordon – Cathraiche (Chair)

Business

Preliminaries

The Chairman on behalf of the Committee congratulated the communities of Portree and Braes for their tremendous work involved in the Christmas lighting in Portree which had been a great success. Fundraising had secured £27,000 for the event and it was intended to organise further community events. There had been other community events across the area and the Council needed to support community groups to arrange these events.

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

There were no apologies for absence.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

There were circulated for information, Minutes of Meeting of the Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee (Comataidh an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair) held on 30 September, 2019, which were approved at the Highland Council meeting held on 31 October, 2019, the terms of which were **NOTED**.

4. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Local Committee Performance Report Aithisg Coileanaidh Comataidh Ionadail Seirbheis Smàlaidh agus Teasairginn na h-Alba

There was circulated Report No SR/18/19 by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- Some of the station availability had been lower than anticipated and this was predominately due to recruitment difficulties. In Uig and Staffin, staffing levels were only half the establishment and Broadford was also showing a downward trend. The Service intended to run a recruitment campaign early in the new year.
- There was a perception that you had to live close to where your local fire station was in order to be considered for employment. While the required response times were in the region of 8 to 10 minutes from the station, there may be some flexibility on response times and the Service were happy to discuss this with applicants. In terms of youth recruitment, there were a lot of young people in the Service and in addition the Service was considering introducing a Cadet Scheme in the area.
- It was advised that NHS Highland had in the past experienced problems in recruiting staff locally and a significant reason for this had been the lack of housing. It was queried if the lack of housing was a problem for the Fire Service recruiting staff. It was advised that the availability of housing was not a significant issue in this area for the Service as most employees were Retained staff and already part of the community.
- It was explained that a number of the larger incidents in this area had not been as a result of Muirburn. The Fire Service were taking the lead on a national wildfire strategy. This would include meeting landowners to discuss tactics for fighting wildfires and also new strategies for tackling wildfires with new equipment and techniques.
- Insofar as road traffic collisions were concerned, it was explained that fire service interaction in these incidents had reduced, probably due to collisions being at lower speed. Road safety campaigns were having a positive effect.
- In terms of the First Responder role for the Fire Service, this was being discussed at a national level and was close to an agreement. This role would be particularly important in rural areas.
- Home fire safety visits were promoted nationally and also through local community engagement by the Fire service. The Service also had recently appointed a Community Safety Advocate in Skye who would be proactive in community engagement and would attend home fire safety visits.

Having scrutinised the Local Performance Report the Committee **NOTED** the report.

5. Area Roads Capital Programme Progress 2019/20 Adhartas Prògram Calpa Rathaidean Sgìreil 2019/20

There was circulated Report No. SR/19/19 by the Executive Chief Officer Customer and Communities.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- The Committee recognised the hard work of the local roads team and thanked them for this. The winter last year had been challenging for local roads teams and there continued to be road infrastructure pressures as a result of increased tourism.
- In terms of staffing levels in the area, there was currently one vacancy which was being advertised. Also, four apprentices were being recruited.
- Additional funding had been brought forward from the 2019/20 roads budget into the 2018/19 budget due to the long harsh winter, but while this was welcomed there was obviously less money in the roads budget in the current financial year which the Service was trying to manage. It was anticipated that the current year's roads maintenance programme would be completed and an update on the programme was provided at the meeting.
- It was advised that there was a significant backlog in road maintenance and in order to highlight this it was advised that for Skye, around £2m a year would be required to maintain the roads in the current condition (currently a third of this amount was spent on roads in Skye). To make improvements in the roads would require significantly more funding.
- An update was provided on progress with white lining in the area and it was also advised that some of the local roads team were to receive training on this activity.
- In terms of the roads budget allocation for Skye, a view was expressed that road usage should be a criteria for allocating funds given the increased traffic from tourism in the area. Roads maintenance was a majority priority for the area and local Members would be working together in order to try and have the roads maintenance budget for the area increased.

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

6. Housing Performance Report Aithisg Dèanadais Taigheadais

There was circulated Report No. SR/20/19 by the Executive Chief Officer Customer and Communities.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- It was noted a maintenance technician had recently been appointed which was welcomed by Members and should improve emergency repair response times. It was also intended to recruit a further Maintenance technician based in the South of Skye.
- There had potentially been some computer system delays and this would explain delays to repairs response times. This was being looked at and an update would be provided to Members.
- There had been an improvement in re-let times in the last quarter as a result of better systems being put in place to speed up work on properties.

- To address the homelessness issue, there was a need to build more houses as this was the only way to accommodate people long term.
- It was queried if universal credit was still having an impact on rent arrears. It was explained that universal credit took time to pay out, but in certain cases, the housing team could apply to the DWP for direct payment for housing costs from Universal Credit. It was expected that rent arrears figures would improve in the next quarter once Universal Credit payments had been received by tenants. The housing team also provided advice to tenants who were experiencing difficulties in paying their rent and referrals were made to the Council's Welfare Advice Service. Early engagement with tenants in housing arrears was key to tackling the issue. A copy of the Council's Arrears Management Policy would be sent to Members.
- It was queried if increased tourism in the area was a reason for higher homelessness presentations in the summer. An undertaking was given to investigate this and report back to Members. It was highlighted that trends in homeless presentations were monitored across Highland and there were certain areas such as Skye where the supply and demand of housing had changed dramatically over the last few years.
- There were currently 80 homelessness presentations in Skye and Lochalsh. A breakdown of presentations in Skye and Raasay would be provided to Members. There were currently 1,134 people on the housing register for Skye and this high figure demonstrated the need for more housing in the area.
- The Committee thanked the housing team for the significant amount of work they undertook.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019.

7. West Highlands & Islands Local Development Plan – Action Programme Plana Leasachadh Ionadail na Gàidhealtachd an Iar agus nan Eilean – Prògram Gnìomha

There was circulated Report No. SR/21/19 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- when considering developer contributions towards the delivery of infrastructure projects, contributions sought should be aligned to the local school area as opposed to the Associated School Group;
- It was explained that as set out in the Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance (2018), contributions towards community facility projects will be sought on a secondary school catchment area basis. One of the reasons for a wide catchment area was to ensure that there were enough projects to consider for funding so as to avoid developer contributions being lost as most developer contributions were time limited. Decisions would have to be made on developer funding where there were multiple projects in a secondary school catchment area and it was expected that guidelines for this would be drawn up in the new year which may include consultation with the Ward Manager and local Members.
- In terms of community projects, it was important that the list of projects be updated on a regular basis in consultation with the Ward Manager and local

Members. If there were projects that had been missed out of the Action Programme, these should be highlighted to Officers for consideration as soon as possible as the Action Programme needs to be published by 30 December, 2019.

- A Masterplan was being developed in Dunvegan for a new school, sports pitch and housing.
- There would be a need for a play park in Kyleakin if there was to be further housing development in the area.
- It was queried what engagement the Council were having with the NHS on transportation links to the new hospital being built on Skye. It was explained that as part of the Planning process for the new hospital, NHS Highland would have considered transport links.
- NHS Highland were a Key agency and there was a legal duty to consult with them on Development Plans. Planning Officers were consulted on the choice of site for the new hospital in Broadford. They had not been consulted on where on the Island the new hospital would be built. Further, the Council had discussions with the NHS on affordable housing in Broadford.
- The Portree Link Road was an important project for the community in diverting traffic away from the centre of Portree. It was advised that certain housing allocations in the WestPlan are required to contribute towards its delivery but that the project would also likely require other sources of funding.
- Reference was made to the difficulties that contractors had in finding suitable accommodation for their workforce for projects on Skye and consideration should be given to this when developing housing projects.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- NOTED** that the Local Development Plan has been adopted;
- APPROVED** the Action Programme in Appendix 1;
- NOTED** the intended arrangements for ongoing monitoring and review of the Action Programme (as set out in Section 6 of the report); and
- NOTED** that the list of community projects would be regularly reviewed in consultation with the Ward Manager and local Members.

Urgent Item of Business – *the following report was taken as an urgent item of business in order that Members could consider priorities for the local area prior to the end of the financial year.*

8. Area Priorities Update

There was circulated Report No SR/22/19 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure & Environment.

In discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- The challenges facing the Skye and Raasay area were probably not anticipated five years ago, given the significant increase in tourism over the last few years. This had created great demands on the Islands infrastructure.

It was therefore welcomed to have this report setting out the local area priorities and aspirations.

- There was a need to consider refining the area priorities as not everything could be done at once.
- A planning day event to be held early in the New Year was welcomed. This would bring together key public sector partners and the wider community to discuss the area priorities.
- Skye's tourism supported a significant number of jobs and for this to be sustainable there was a need for investment in the area. The Council's lead role would enable additional funding to be sought for investment in the area.
- The scale of issues to be addressed and the money required was significant and would likely require both Scottish Government and UK Government assistance.
- A lot had been achieved in terms of the 2017 list of area priorities, such as improved health care, new schools and money for tourism related infrastructure projects which had made a huge difference to communities.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** the development of a clear place based approach to priority setting for Skye and Raasay that can be used to highlight development opportunities and ideas for improved service delivery, with an update being brought to the next Area Committee.

The meeting ended at 12.15 p.m.

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Care, Learning and Housing Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 5 December 2019 at 10.05 am.

Present:

Mrs J Barclay	Mr D Mackay
Mr B Boyd	Mr G MacKenzie
Mr R Bremner (video conferencing)	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr A Christie	Mr D Macpherson
Mrs M Cockburn	Mr R MacWilliam
Mr J Finlayson (Chair)	Mrs B McAllister
Mr A Graham	Mr G Ross
Mr T Heggie	Ms N Sinclair (video conferencing)
Mr A Jarvie	Mr C Smith

NHS Highland:

Prof H van Woerden

Religious Representatives:

Ms S Lamont
The Very Rev S Murray
Mr W Skene

In attendance:

Ms D Manson, Chief Executive
Ms L Weber, Executive Chief Officer Health and Social Care
Mr A Gunn, Chief Officer Resources, Care and Learning Service
Mr B Porter, Head of Resources, Care and Learning Service
Ms K Ralston, Interim Head of Children's Services, Care and Learning Service
Ms N Grant, Interim Head of Education, Care and Learning Service
Ms B Brown, Strategic Quality Improvement Manager, Care and Learning Service
Mr I Kyle, Children's Planning Manager
Mrs F Shearer, Interim Care and Learning Manager – South, Care and Learning Service
Ms R Bell, Policy Officer, Care and Learning Service
Mr M Mitchell, Finance Manager, Finance Service
Ms J Douglas, Care and Learning Alliance (Third Sector)
Ms G Newman, Highland Children's Forum (Third Sector)
Ms D Sutherland, YPeople (Third Sector)
Ms S Blyth, Highland Parent Council Partnership
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Chief Executive's Office
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

Also in attendance:

Mr S Walsh, Chief Executive, High Life Highland
Mr R Henderson, Chair of Highland Youth Parliament

Ms K Brown, Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament for Inverness and Nairn, and the UK Youth Parliament
Ms P Gowie, Lucky2BHere
Head Teachers from the Change Team

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 J Finlayson in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence had been intimated on behalf of Mrs I Campbell, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Ms E Knox, Mr W Mackay, Ms L Munro, Mrs M Paterson and Mrs F Robertson.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

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

- Item 4 – Mr T Heggie, Mr A Jarvie, Mr D Macpherson and Mr G Ross (all non-financial)
- Item 6 – Mr A Christie (financial)
- Item 7 – Mr A Christie (financial and non-financial)
- Item 8 – Mr A Graham (financial)
- Item 9 – Mr A Graham (financial)
- Item 15ii – Mr A Christie (financial)

3. Good News/Outstanding Achievements Naidheachdan Matha/Coileanaidhean Air Leth

There had been tabled a list of good news and outstanding achievements by people and groups.

The Chair having explained that consideration was being given to how best to recognise the wide range of achievements throughout Highland, the Committee **NOTED** the good news and outstanding achievements.

4. High Life Highland Progress Report and Highland Youth Parliament Presentation Aithisg Adhartais High Life na Gàidhealtachd agus Taisbeanadh Pàrlamaid Òigridh na Gàidhealtachd

Declarations of Interest:

Mr T Heggie, Mr A Jarvie and Mr D Macpherson 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.

Mr G Ross declared a non-financial interest as Treasurer of Highland Disability Sport 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 CLH/72/19 dated 25 November 2019 by the Chief Executive, High Life Highland.

The Chief Executive, High Life Highland, gave a presentation in amplification of the report. In addition, Members of the Highland Youth Parliament gave a presentation on its work.

Discussion ensued, during which Members commended the wide-ranging work of High Life Highland, particularly the outreach and rehabilitation work taking place, and emphasised the need to ensure that funding was maintained at a reasonable level. In responding to points raised, the Chief Executive, High Life Highland, undertook to liaise with Councillor M Cockburn regarding library social outreach, and to discuss with NHS Highland the possibility of providing rehabilitation for stroke patients.

Discussion also took place on the role of the Youth Convener, during which Members expressed concern regarding the Youth Convener and other unelected Members of the Committee having voting rights, particularly given that Committees were reducing in size from 25 to 18 Elected Members. It was confirmed that this issue would be considered as part of the ongoing Governance Review, and a report on the role of the Youth Convener would be presented to the first meeting of the Education Committee on 6 February 2020.

The value of the Youth Convener and the Highland Youth Parliament in terms of representing their peers was recognised and, in relation to Elected Member engagement with local Youth Forums, it was suggested that Members be notified of meeting dates at an early stage so they could make arrangements to attend.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** that High Life Highland reporting be changed to reflect the Council's Corporate Plan 2019-22 which had been approved by the Highland Council at its meeting held on 5 September 2019, and that the Service Delivery Contract with High Life Highland be changed to reflect that;
- ii. **AGREED** that High Life Highland had met or exceeded the outcomes expected in the Service Delivery Contract with The Highland Council for the operating period to September 2019;
- iii. **NOTED** the general updates since the last report to the Care, Learning and Housing Committee in May 2019;
- iv. **AGREED** to reaffirm the Highland Council's commitment to the Youth Convener position;
- v. **AGREED** that the Youth Convener recruitment process be amended as outlined in the report to place a greater balance on the involvement of young people in it;
- vi. **AGREED** that more formalised links be developed between Council service managers and the Youth Convener position;

- vii. **AGREED** that the role of the Youth Convener be included on the agenda for the Education Committee on 6 February 2020; and
- viii. **AGREED** that Members be notified of the dates of local Youth Forums.

5. Provision of Defibrillators and Emergency Life Support Training in Secondary Schools in Highland – Presentation by Lucky2BHere
Solar Dhì-fhibrilichean agus Trèanadh Taic-Beatha Èiginneach ann an Àrd-sgoiltean anns a’ Ghàidhealtachd – taisbeanadh le Lucky2BHere

There had been circulated Report No CLH/73/19 dated 15 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

The report introduced a presentation by representatives of the Lucky2BHere charity, which continued to work with secondary schools across Highland. Information was provided on the ongoing work to deliver emergency life support training and to support schools and communities to acquire an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- training was especially important and, in addition to the training being provided to 3rd year pupils, it was hoped this could be expanded to include teachers and other school and Highland Council staff;
- the importance of registering the location of AED with the Scottish Ambulance Service was stressed. Signage would also be welcomed, with the example of how Comhairle nan Eilean Siar had addressed this being cited;
- the on-going service costs of AEDs to communities was recognised;
- the practise adopted in other countries was referred to where, for example, empty telephone kiosks were used to house AEDs; and
- it was disappointing that some commercial stores were reluctant to have them installed on their premises.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the progress being made as Highland Council continued to work collaboratively with the Lucky2BHere charity to support secondary and special schools to secure a defibrillator and to deliver a programme of emergency life support training to 3rd year pupils in 2020;
- ii. **AGREED** to Lucky2BHere updating the Highland Council with school evaluations and next steps; and
- iii. **AGREED** that the possibility of extending emergency life support training to teachers and school and council staff be explored.

6. Highland Health and Social Care Annual Performance Report 2018-19
Aithisg Coileanaidh Bliadhnaile Slàinte agus Cùram Sòisealta na Gàidhealtachd 2018–19

Declaration of Interest: Mr A Christie declared a financial interest in this item as a Non-Executive Director of NHS 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 CLH/74/19 dated 27 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive expressed thanks for the feedback received from the third sector, particularly those who helped deliver commissioned services. As Members were aware officers were working on a process which would provide a much more constructive and engaged partnership with NHS Highland in terms of working closer together both on children's and adult services, and the detail of this was being explored at Members' workshops. In recognising that there were some inaccuracies in the report, she assured Members that this review would improve the quality of reporting and provide an opportunity to look at the surrounding governance arrangements. It was recognised that the current process was not ideal and that third sector partners needed an opportunity to be involved in the construction of the reports and to feedback prior to reports being finalised. Information would be brought back to both the Education and Health, Care and Wellbeing Committees outlining the reports which would be provided on an annual basis as well as the engagement process with the third sector, recognising their value, together with the voluntary sector, in achieving outcomes.

The Committee scrutinised and **NOTED** the Annual Performance Report.

7. Performance of Young People from Deprived Backgrounds Coileanadh Dhaoine Óga bho Chùlaibhean Easbhaidheach

Declarations of Interest: Mr A Christie declared a financial interest in this item as a Non-Executive Director of NHS Highland, and a non-financial interest as General Manager of Inverness, Badenoch and Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureau but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interests did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No CLH/75/19 dated 25 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, Members commented that the attainment of young people from deprived backgrounds and Adverse Childhood Experience awareness were community issues, and it was important to involve Community Partnerships. It was necessary to accelerate the good work taking place and it was suggested that an Action Plan, including milestones, as well as information on what was working well in other areas of Scotland, be prepared so that progress could be monitored. In addition, the need to recognise travelling communities was emphasised.

The Chair added that it was necessary to continue to make representations regarding the use of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation to determine attainment in line with deprivation, as it did not take account of rural deprivation and working poverty.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the positive progress made overall in the performance of young people from deprived areas;
- ii. **NOTED** the emerging good practice in closing the poverty related attainment gap in schools across the Highlands;

- iii. **AGREED** that on an annual basis the attainment of young people from deprived backgrounds would be reported to Area Committees; and
- iv. **AGREED** that an Action Plan, including milestones, be prepared to monitor progress.

8. Review of the Statutory Consultation Exercise to establish a Gaelic Medium catchment area for Mount Pleasant Primary School, Thurso
**Ath-sgrùdadh dhen Eacarsaich Cho-chomhairleachaidh Reachdail gus sgìre-
sgoile Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig a stèidheachadh airson Bun-Sgoil Mount
Pleasant, Inbhir Theòrsa**

Declaration of Interest: Mr A Graham declared a financial interest in this item as an employee of Bòrd na Gàidhlig and left the Chamber for the duration of the item.

There had been circulated Report No CLH/76/19 dated 6 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

Gaelic Medium Education had been delivered in Thurso for over ten years and there was broad support for the formalisation of the catchment area. However, parents had raised concerns relating to the transition of Gaelic Medium primary school pupils to secondary school and it was important the Council delivered the plans that had been indicated would be in place so there was continuity in Gaelic teaching and learning both in Mount Pleasant High School and Thurso High School.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the Proposal set out within the Consultation Report and associated appendices;
 - ii. **NOTED** the representations received and the report from Education Scotland; and
 - * iii. **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the Council the creation of a Gaelic Medium catchment area for Mount Pleasant Primary School encompassing the whole of the Thurso Associated School Group, as shown on the map at Appendix B of the report.
- 9. Statutory Consultation – Gaelic Medium Catchment Proposals for Gairloch Primary School**
Co-chomhairle Reachdail – Molaidhean airson Sgìrean-sgoile Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig airson Bun-Sgoil Gheàrrloch

Declaration of Interest: Mr A Graham declared a financial interest in this item as an employee of Bòrd na Gàidhlig and left the Chamber for the duration of the item.

There had been circulated Report No CLH/77/19 dated 6 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

The Committee **AGREED** to proceed to statutory consultation on the basis of the Proposal attached to the report.

10. Reviewing the Curriculum to Improve Outcomes for All Ag Ath-sgrùdadh a' Churraicealaim gus Coileanadh a Thoir air Adhart airson nan Uile

There had been circulated Report No CLH/78/19 dated 26 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- in reviewing curriculum provision Members needed to be aware of the timelines, milestones, the reporting process and the officers involved;
- in adopting a positive approach it was important to be careful with the use of language. The successes which had been achieved over the years needed to be recognised and built on, recognising that it would be important to identify areas that needed to be refined; and
- the need to recruit and retain staff was paramount, especially in small rural schools, and this was why the development of a virtual school was necessary.

The Committee **AGREED** that:-

- i. a Highland Council review of curriculum provision take place in response to the findings and recommendations of the national curriculum review currently underway by the Scottish Government;
- ii. schools should use innovation and creativity to design a curriculum suited to their individual context, giving the autonomy to decide locally on the number of qualifications offered to given year groups, including taking account of the distinct nature and needs of the culture, heritage and economy of the Highlands;
- iii. curriculum rationales should reflect the right to inclusion, with scope for individual pathway planning;
- iv. schools and the local authority should maximise the opportunities for achievement through effective collaboration and partnership working;
- v. good practice visits locally, nationally and internationally would strengthen the work in curriculum review and planning, providing scaffolding for construction of new curriculums to close the attainment gap and improve outcomes for all; and
- vi. that Members be advised of timelines, milestones, the reporting process and the officers involved in the review of curriculum provision.

11. Supporting Education Transformation A' Toirt Taic do dh'Eadar-ghluasad Foghlaim

There had been circulated Report No CLH/79/19 dated 24 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, Members welcomed the report. However, it was suggested that, in addition to regular reports, it would be helpful to continue to receive presentations from the Change Team on the individual workstreams. The Chair added that Members could also approach the Change Team outwith Committee to seek more detail on the work taking place.

Discussion also took place on the issue of self-evaluation, during which Members commented that it was necessary to understand why other areas of Scotland achieved better inspection results than Highland, and to support all staff involved in self-

evaluation to make improvements. In addition, it was necessary to re-emphasise, as part of the school improvement planning process, the importance of self-evaluation and that it needed to include the whole school community.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the update provided regarding Education Change Team activities; and
- ii. **AGREED** that presentations continue to be provided by the Change Team on the individual workstreams.

12. Early Learning and Child Care Update **Cunntas às Ùr mu Thràth-ionnsachadh agus Cùram-chloinne**

There had been circulated Report No CLH/80/19 dated 26 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, an update was sought, and provided, on the issue of hours being restricted to 600 for any given nursery if parents chose to split their 1140 hours between two different nursery provisions. The Chief Executive emphasised the need to recognise the diversity of families in Highland and that, in terms of setting policy for 2020, it was necessary to be as responsive as possible. A communication would be provided to Members in advance of visits to Area Committees in the new year, and feedback was sought on any local issues.

Members also raised the issue of significant renovations being carried out in leased premises, and it was questioned whether a best value approach had been taken to negotiations. In response, it was explained that the expansion of early learning and childcare was an opportunity not only to invest in Council buildings but to invest in partners who were working with the Council to deliver provision, and to sustain buildings in communities. Information on specific premises could be provided outwith the meeting.

On the point being raised, it was explained that the Northern Meeting Park setting referred to in Appendix 1 was not local authority provision but related to early discussions regarding developing a small outdoor setting.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. and acknowledged the developments and progress in early years and the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion Programme;
- ii. and acknowledged the continued risks to the Early Learning and Childcare programme; and
- iii. that a briefing would be provided to Members on how the expanded hours would be provisioned within their local area before March 2020.

13. Deferred and Early Entry to School **Inntrigeadh Dàilichte agus Tràth dhan Sgoil**

There had been circulated Report No CLH/81/19 dated 26 November 2019 by the Chief Executive.

In introducing the report, the Chair highlighted that the policy had been modified in response to feedback from Members, parents and staff. In addition, the Chief Executive thanked Third Sector partners for raising the issue of deferred entry, which had then become the subject of national debate, and for advocating on the Council's behalf for policy change.

During discussion, Members welcomed the report, the flexibility the policy provided, and the decision of the Scottish Government to introduce legislation to entitle children whose school start was deferred to access funded early learning and childcare in their deferred year. However, concern was expressed that some of the wording in the guidance could be misleading. In particular, the statement on page 4 of the guidance that placing children with classes of younger peers made no difference to outcomes, and the majority of the evidence cited, related not to deferral but to grade retention, which was entirely different. In addition, it was suggested that the guidance could be worded more positively.

The Chair proposed that the guidance be approved subject to the wording being amended to reflect Members' concerns, with the final decision being delegated to the Interim Head of Education in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Education Committee. It was confirmed that Members of the Opposition would have the opportunity to provide input.

The Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the Guidance (at Appendix A of the report) on being educated outwith the peer group, including deferred and early entry to school, subject to the wording being amended to reflect Members' concerns with final agreement being delegated to the Interim Head of Education in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Education Committee; and
- ii. **NOTED** the supporting information and references.

14. Family Nurse Partnership Board Bòrd Com-pàirteachais nan Nursaichean Teaghlaich

The Committee **AGREED** that Ms L Munro be appointed to the Family Nurse Partnership Board.

15. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

Declaration of Interest: Mr A Christie declared a financial interest in item 15ii as a Non-Executive Director of NHS 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.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the Minutes of the Highland Child Protection Committee – 28 May 2019;
- ii. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Adult Services Development and Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 4 October 2019;
- iii. **NOTED** the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers – 13 November 2019; and

iv. **NOTED** the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers – 13 November 2019.

The meeting concluded at 12.50 pm