

**The Highland Council  
No. 3 2021/2022**

**Minutes of Meeting of the Highland Council held REMOTELY on Thursday, 9 September 2021 at 10.35am.**

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

**Present:**

Mr C Aitken	Mr D Louden
Mr B Allan	Mrs L MacDonald
Mr R Balfour	Mr A MacInnes
Mrs J Barclay	Mr D Mackay
Mr B Boyd	Mr W MacKay
Mr R Bremner	Mr G MacKenzie
Mr I Brown	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr J Bruce	Mr A Mackinnon
Mrs C Caddick	Ms A MacLean
Mrs I Campbell	Mr C MacLeod
Miss J Campbell	Mr D MacLeod
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair	Mr D Macpherson
Mrs H Carmichael	Mrs B McAllister
Mr A Christie	Mr J McGillivray
Dr I Cockburn	Mr H Morrison
Mrs M Cockburn	Mr C Munro
Ms K Currie	Ms L Munro
Mrs M Davidson	Ms P Munro
Mr J Finlayson	Mrs M Paterson
Mr M Finlayson	Mr I Ramon
Mr C Fraser	Mr A Rhind
Mr D Fraser	Mr M Reiss
Mr L Fraser	Mr D Rixson
Mr R Gale	Mrs F Robertson
Mr J Gordon	Mrs T Robertson
Mr K Gowans	Ms E Roddick
Mr A Graham	Mr K Rosie
Mr J Gray	Mr P Saggars
Mrs P Hadley	Mr A Sinclair
Mr T Heggie	Mr C Smith
Mr A Henderson	Ms M Smith
Mr A Jarvie	Mr B Thompson
Ms E Knox	Ms J Tilt
Mr B Lobban	Mrs C Wilson

**In Attendance:**

Chief Executive	Executive Chief Officer, Economy & Infrastructure
Executive Chief Officer, Communities & Place	Executive Chief Officer, Performance & Governance
Executive Chief Officer, Education & Learning	Executive Chief Officer, Property & Housing
Executive Chief Officer, Health & Social Care	Executive Chief Officer, Resources & Finance
	Executive Chief Officer, Transformation

**Mr B Lobban in the Chair**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf Mr G Adam, Mr A Baxter, Mrs D MacKay, Mr S Mackie, Mr R MacWilliam and Mr N McLean.

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

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

General – Mrs M Cockburn as a Council appointee on the Inverness, Badenoch & Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureau, Mr J McGillivray on the basis that a relation was a Council employee and Ms L Munro as a Director of High Life Highland (All Non-Financial)

Item 7– Mr A Christie and Ms P Hadley (Both Non-Financial)

Item 10(i) – Mr B Lobban (Non-Financial) and Mrs C Caddick (Financial)

Item 10(ii) – Mr J McGillivray and Mr A Henderson (Both Financial)

Item 11 – Mr A Christie, Mr K Gowans and Mrs C Caddick (All Financial) and Mr D Rixson, Mr C MacLeod, Mr A Jarvie and Mr B Thompson (All Non-Financial)

Item 12 – Mr D Rixson, Mr J McGillivray, Mr A Jarvie and Mr B Thompson (All Non-Financial)

Item 13 – Mr A Jarvie and Mr B Thompson (Both Non-Financial)

Item 14 – Mr A Christie, Mr K Gowans and Mr A Jarvie (All Financial) and Mr T Heggie, Mr A Jarvie and Mr B Thompson (All Non-Financial)

Item 15 - Mr A Christie and Mr A Jarvie (Both Financial)

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, the Convener thanked Members for their continued use of the electronic system for receipt of agendas and reports for meetings which was helping to save on significant costs for the Council.

In this regard, he confirmed his intention to arrange a further training session in the near future for those who still wished additional assistance.

## **3. Recess Powers Cumhachdan Fosaìdh**

It was **NOTED** that, during the recess period, recess powers had not been used.

## **4. Membership of the Council Ballrachd na Comhairle**

The Convener, on behalf of the Council, welcomed the new Members who had been elected following the By-Elections on 12 August -

Ms Jill Tilt (Ward 3)

Mr Colin Aitken (Ward 13)

Ms Tilt and Mr Aitken responded accordingly.

## **5. Presentation – Confucius Hub – Grantown Grammar School Taisbeanadh – Hub Confucius – Sgoil Gràmair Bhaile nan Granddach**

The Council **NOTED** and thanked Ms Ann Mackintosh for her presentation at the meeting in respect of the Confucius Hub at Grantown Grammar School.

## **6. Confirmation of Minutes Daingneachadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais**

There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the Minutes of

Meeting of the Council held on 24 June 2021 as contained in the Volume which had been circulated separately - which were **APPROVED** – subject to a correction to be made to a voting record in respect of Mr D MacKay/Mrs D Mackay.

It was also **NOTED** that an issue had arisen following IT changes to Members' names which had conflicted with the names within the voting database (and had led to a Member being able to vote twice at the last meeting). On that basis, it was confirmed that this would now be corrected and Members were further reminded of the process for submission of votes.

## 7. Minutes of Meetings of Committees Geàrr-chunntasan Choinneamhan Chomataidhean

There had been submitted for confirmation as correct records, for information as regards delegated business and for approval as appropriate, the Minutes of Meetings of Committees – those which were contained in Volume and those which had been circulated separately.

**Declarations of Interest – Mr A Christie (as General Manager of the Inverness, Badenoch & Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureau) and Ms P Hadley (as a Local Member in Badenoch & Strathspey) declared non-financial interests in this item 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.**

The Minutes, having been moved and seconded, were **APPROVED** – matters arising having been dealt with as follows:-

Badenoch & Strathspey Committee - Starred Item 8 – Kingussie & Grantown-on-Spey Common Good Funds - **AGREED** the re-classification of the property included in the Asset Register and re-activation of the Kingussie Common Good Fund.

Also **AGREED** that, due to the financial position of the fund, Kingussie Common Good property should continue to be maintained by Highland Council until such time as the fund recovered sufficiently to sustain Kingussie Common Good assets.

Health, Social Care & Wellbeing Committee - Starred Item 9 – Revised Highland Partnership Integration Scheme - **AGREED** that housing for staff be added to the Risk Section at Section 3.5 of the report.

Caithness Committee - Starred Item 6 – Thurso and North West Caithness & Wick and East Caithness (Wards 2 and 3) Place Based Investment Funds – Proposed Funding Allocations - **AGREED** to create and implement a Council wide playground strategy that considered the needs and expectations of communities and supported the active play, well-being and social activity of children and their families.

### Education Committee

Starred Item 11 - Review of Statutory Consultation Exercise – Closure of Uig Primary School - **AGREED** the discontinuation of education at Uig Primary School, transferring its catchment to that of Kilmuir Primary School.

Starred Item 13 – Appointment to Highland Disability Sport - **AGREED** the appointment of Mr Calum Munro.

## **Minutes not included in the Volume**

Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board held on 19 March (approved by the Board on 18 June) – **NOTED**

Redesign Board held on 20 August – **AGREED**

Recovery, Improvement and Transformation Board held on 23 August - **AGREED**

Climate Change Working Group held on 18 August - **AGREED**

Recruitment Panel – Executive Chief Officer, Education & Learning held on 10 June (Shortleeting) and 30 June (Appointment) - **NOTED**

### **8. Membership of Committees, etc Ballarachd Chomataidhean, msaa**

It was **NOTED** that Mr A Baxter had now joined the Conservative & Unionist Group.

On that basis, and also following the By-Elections in Ward 3 and Ward 13, membership of the Council was now as follows:-

Ind – 25/SNP - 18/Cons & Unionist - 11/Lib Dem– 11//Highland Matters – 4/ Labour - 3/Sutherland Independent – 1/Non-Aligned – 1

The formula in respect of the number of places on Strategic Committees remained unchanged at 7/5/3/3.

The Council also **AGREED** the following

Economy & Infrastructure Committee - Mr B Lobban to fill the current vacancy for an Independent Group Member.

Education Committee – Mr C Munro and Mr D Fraser to fill the current vacancies for Independent Group Members – and Mr C Aitken to replace Mr A Christie

Communities & Place Committee – Ms J Tilt to replace Mrs T Robertson

Resources Committee – Mr A Christie to replace Mrs C Caddick

Housing & Property Committee – Ms J Tilt to replace Ms L Munro

Wellbeing Joint Sub Committee – Mr D Fraser to fill the current vacancy for an Independent Group Member

Redesign Board – Mr C Aitken to replace a Member from the SNP Group (to be confirmed)

Valuation Joint Board – Either a Liberal Democrat or a Conservative & Unionist Member (to be confirmed as place currently tied) to replace Mr J Gray.

**9. Question Time**  
**Am Ceiste**

The following Questions had been received by the Head of Corporate Governance:-

**(i) Mr R Bremner**

**To the Chair of the Economy & Infrastructure Committee**

"There has been considerable concern by members of the public, especially in Caithness, in respect of the roads infrastructure. For some time there has been an underspend of the committed funding by Council for the road's infrastructure in Caithness and in other areas of Highland. It is imperative that the extra committed funding this year is spent and that this is the case for next year also. What comfort can our Highland communities be given that Council will actually ensure this happens?"

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, and whilst welcoming that extra funding was being spent this year and that a review was underway through the Council's Redesign Board, it was highlighted that the Council's commitment to extra funding was for the current and following year and would not be enough to enable an accelerated recovery of the roads' infrastructure. As such, it was queried as to whether there would be a commitment to further increased funding in the current period and the same increased commitment in the financial year 2023 and beyond to continue get the roads' infrastructure back to the condition that was necessary to support communities and commerce in Caithness and throughout the Highland area.

In response, it was confirmed that a review of the Capital Programme was being undertaken at present and the Roads Capital Budget was an important consideration within that to ensure that the backlog and the future capital maintenance projects were sustained. All Members would be involved in the priority setting for capital works, including roads, and this would be the subject of a report to the Council in October.

**(ii) Mr R Bremner**

**To the Chair of the Communities & Place Committee**

"Three years ago I brought a motion to Council committing Council to implementing an effective policy in respect of abandoned and, in particular, nuisance vehicles. Since then, progress has been very slow. This policy desperately needs to be implemented. I know that reference was made to the Northern Joint Collaboration Board for a national response and covid undoubtedly will have impacted. What position is Council at in reviewing and implementing an effective policy to deal with abandoned and nuisance vehicles?"

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, and in recognising that pilot projects had been implemented and had had some effect/success, the outcome sought was an effective policy that could be implemented successfully. The main issue would be funding to support such a policy and ensure that it was effective in its implementation and it was therefore queried as to what steps were being taken to identify this funding.

In response, it was explained that no funding had been available from the Northern Joint Collaboration Board. The Communities and Place Committee recognised the statutory duty, under the Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978, to remove abandoned vehicles from land or roads and expenditure had been improved to meet this duty. The current annual budget was £3200 to cover the recovery and disposal of any vehicles. Any additional required expenditure was managed within the wider Environmental Health budget. As part of the development of the new policy on abandoned and nuisance vehicles, the Environmental Health and Housing teams would consider budgets, including maximising opportunities for cost recovery, where legislation permitted and partnership working to target problematic areas. Work was also progressing with the Scottish Government and CoSLA on a wider workforce plan and Environmental Health teams given recent public health demands and EU exit budget implications.

**(iii) Mr R Bremner**

**To the Chair of the Housing & Property Committee**

“Do you agree that heating systems that are being replaced or installed by Highland Council in Council properties should be as affordable as possible for the occupiers?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, it was queried as to whether the Council would commit to ensuring that an effective process of monitoring of kilowatt hours to determine the performance of new systems in respect of savings was put in place as well as monitoring their operation to ensure that tenants and occupiers were not adversely affected by the installation and running cost of heating systems installed by the Council whilst contributing as effectively as possible to climate change goals.

In response, it was acknowledged that the question related to the transformation of energy in the Council's housing stock, partly to address affordability and also to address and meet some of the climate change goals. The way in which the Housing Service currently monitored the kilowatt hour usage, where it proved to be more expensive, was on a case- by-case basis. This was a reactive approach effectively to where tenants felt their systems were overly expensive. The best way to deal with this issue was to make sure the heating options that were installed were going to be cheap and effective to run. Whilst it was acknowledged the request was for a monitoring system, there was a monitoring system in place but, moving forward, it was important to make sure that the Council had confirmation that heating systems installed were going to be cheaper for tenants. Whilst it was understood that the question referred to heating options, to be completely transformational in terms of fuel poverty in the Highlands, different heating options would not address that and the fabric of buildings needed to be addressed. To do that at scale required the output from the asset management approach to housing that was currently being taken to the Committee. The output of that would take 12 to 18 months to complete so, if the concern was about reducing fuel poverty, the Council was working towards it but it would take time to get to the answer. The output of that would be seen in the HRA Capital Plan as it came before forthcoming Committees. The Council was acting on fuel poverty and the cost of installing new heating systems and there would be opportunity for Members to contribute as to how this would be taken forward.

**(iv) Mr D Macpherson**

**To the Leader of the Council**

“Can you please give an assurance that all of the CCTV cameras in Inverness are fully functioning and have now been upgraded to the new Digital colour cameras, as opposed to the old unreliable analogue ones, and that adequate funding has been sourced and provided to complete the recommended upgrade of cameras and to the Inverness control room, estimated at £100,000 by Council officers, to ensure that the citizens of Inverness and visitors to the Highland Capital are safe in the knowledge that Police and the Highland Council (who run the CCTV System), are fully monitoring the screens in the Burnett Road Police Station control room, to record criminal and antisocial behaviour in the streets and parks throughout the city. And can you give a status report on the proposals to link up the other Highland Towns like Wick and Thurso, as well as the Kessock Bridge CCTV cameras and those CCTV cameras in the Rose Street Car Park in Inverness?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, it was suggested that, in view of the response which had been received, there was no option but for Mr Macpherson, the constituents of Inverness and the various Highland towns to ask the identical question of the Highland Council once again in a Freedom of Information format.

In response, it was acknowledged that Mr Macpherson was at liberty to take that course of action.

**(v) Mr D Macpherson**

**To the Leader of the Council**

“Nominations have just closed for Interim Community Council elections, what will you be doing to demonstrate the Highland Council’s commitment to ensuring strong and adequately funded community councils exist, and how will you fund their ongoing existence and promote their value to deliver localism and help their communities in the planning decision making progress for Highland Council and the communities that they represent?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, it was queried as to whether the letter which had been set to the Leader on 1 December 2020, proposing a detailed strategy and marketing plan to help recruit new Community Councillors, had been lost or disregarded.

In response, it was requested that Mr Macpherson resend the letter and the Leader would deal with it accordingly.

**(vi) Mr A Jarvie**

**To the Leader of the Council**

“Can you outline the successes of and how many members of staff have been professionally developed in the Council’s long heralded “grow our own” programme?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, it was queried as to what the numbers were in respect of the Council's "grow your own" approach? For example, how many staff had been trained into new roles.

In response, it was confirmed that figures were not yet available as there was so much "grow your own" taking place across the Council. The Leader would speak with the Chief Executive to establish whether there were any figures which could be drawn out at the present time but it was not intended to ask busy Officers to spend their time counting rather than training.

**(vii) Mr A Jarvie**

**To the Leader of the Council**

"Can you provide me with the date the Corporate press release was issued announcing your coalition with the SNP Group?"

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, it was queried as to whether the Leader was assured that the SNP Group and all its members were certain that there was no such coalition and what assurances had she sought in this regard.

In response, and on the basis that there was no such coalition, the Leader declined to respond further.

**(viii) Mr A Jarvie**

**To the Chair of the Economy & Infrastructure Committee**

"The most up to date figure show that roughly 15% of the roads maintenance budget has been spent so far. Will this be spent in full this year or will our roads be underinvested in?"

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, it was queried as to what action would be taken to stop the ongoing problem of underspends being carried forward into the next financial year.

In response, it was confirmed that some contractors had been taken on in the current year in the hope of finishing the programmed works before the weather changed and the budget would be spent as quickly as possible.

**(ix) Mr D Macpherson**

**To the Chair of the Economy & Infrastructure Committee**

"Can you please give an update of the spend on roads and the expected underspend by the end of this calendar year and the financial year end?"

The response had been circulated.



In terms of a supplementary question, it was queried as to what percentage of available roads monies would be spent by the end of October.

In response, it was confirmed that it was expected that 100% spend would be achieved by the end of October unless any unforeseen circumstances changed this position.

## **10. Notices of Motion Brathan Glusaid**

The following Notices of Motion had been received by the Head of Corporate Governance:-

### **Declarations of Interest –**

**Mr B Lobban, as the mover of the Motion at Item 10(i), declared a non-financial interest and left the Chair – which was then taken over by the Vice Convener (Mr A Henderson). Having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, Mr Lobban concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.**

**Mrs C Caddick declared a financial interest in Item 10(i) on the basis of having a share in a self-catering property in Aviemore and confirmed that she would not take part in this item.**

(i) Given the serious problems occurring in Badenoch & Strathspey due to the massive increase in Short Term Lets and the effect that has on the provision of permanent dwellings, that the Council agrees a draft proposal to designate a Short Term Let Control Area covering the whole of Badenoch & Strathspey as detailed under the Town and Country Planning (Short-term Let Control Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2021.

Following completion of statutory consultation, the Council brings a report to the Economy & Infrastructure Committee for final approval prior to submission to Scottish Ministers.

Signed: Mr B Lobban Ms P Hadley Mrs M Cockburn Mr John Bruce

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- it had to be highlighted that the situation in relation to locally affordable housing in the Badenoch & Strathspey area had reached crisis point and the building of more houses was only part of the issue;
- the proposal to designate a short term let control area covering the whole of Badenoch & Strathspey would not result in a 'blanket ban' but would allow the Planning system to consider whether the change of use from a permanent dwelling to a short term let was appropriate in a particular area;
- there had to be a balance which not only promoted tourism in the area but also allowed local people to live and work in their own communities and to service the local businesses which brought tourism to the area in the first place;
- it was the case that there were regular complaints about noise and bad behaviour from short term lets and these proposals would allow local people to feed into the planning system and to be a part of the decision-making process for something which was having a massive impact on their community;

- the lack of housing available for key workers/staff was now a real issue for local businesses and, along with the continual increase in the cost of housing, made it vital that action was taken now;
- it was very regrettable that recently built affordable housing was already being used for short term lets;
- it was imperative that any changes made were strong enough not just for local businesses and communities but also future generations;
- there was a responsibility to put in place new arrangements to support current residents but also to support those who wished to come and live and work in the area;
- it was a fact that many small businesses were not currently operating at full capacity due to workers not being able to be accommodated in the area;
- there was increasing concern about the number of notices of eviction being issued so that properties could be converted into short-term lets;
- there was a real danger that local organisations and Community Councils would be lost if local people were not able to stay in their own communities and this would be detrimental for all concerned;
- although this proposal was focused on Badenoch & Strathspey, it was likely that the same issues would impact on other areas of the Highlands and in fact this was already happening in some cases;
- the future sustainability and growth of local communities was crucial and tribute was paid to the work of Local Housing Associations in this respect;
- this was a well-balanced and specifically targeted proposal which had the potential to benefit all sectors if taken forward;
- it should be highlighted that there were already a number of issues in Inverness in relation to the conversion of properties within residential areas to short let accommodation, including the impact of noise/disturbance on neighbouring properties, inconsiderate parking of vehicles and the environmental consequences of no proper adherence to refuse collection requirements; and
- it was hoped that any future fees to be charged would be cost neutral or at the very least would meet the cost of Officer time in relation to their implementation.

### **Decision**

The Council **AGREED** the terms of the Notice of Motion as detailed.

**Declarations of Interest – Mr J McGillivray and Mr A Henderson declared financial interests in Item 10(ii) as members of the Local Government Pension Scheme and confirmed that they would not be taking part in this item.**

(ii) Council:

- recognising the continuing, serious and accelerating changes to the world caused by climate change, reaffirms its declaration of a climate and ecological emergency and renews its commitment to achieving a carbon neutral Highlands by 2025;

- recognising that we live in one world, where local actions have global consequences and vice versa, affirms its commitment to sustainable development and environmental protection and acknowledges its role in upholding human rights and international law;

- notes that the Highland Council Pensions Committee must have regard to the Council's fiduciary duty as administering authority for the pension fund, recognises that this duty is consistent with selecting investments according to ethical, environmental, social and governance criteria as well as financial return and is concerned that the pension fund currently retains large holdings, worth in excess of £160 million, in companies, including fossil fuel and armaments companies, that fail to meet the environmental, social and governance standards expected of a responsible Local Authority pension fund;

- welcomes the arrangement in September of the workshops to develop and publish the Responsible Investing Policy Statement proposed in the Statement of Investment Principles adopted by the Pension Committee on 18 March 2021 and, as part of its consideration, encourages the Pensions Committee to have regard to the principles set out in the Highland Charter for Responsible Investment and urges the Pensions Committee to consider making a formal commitment prior to COP26 to divestment from fossil fuels, armaments and other environmentally and socially harmful products and activities as soon as possible.

Signed: Ms P Hadley Ms M Smith

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the terms of this Motion represented part of a co-ordinated attempt to position Scotland as a market leader for responsible and ethical investment (and not a market follower);
- specifically, the Motion asked that the principles around this issue be closely considered and that the Council unite in a voice that reinforced the direction in which it was already travelling as this issue had been discussed for some time;
- the Council's legal and moral obligation to achieve net zero emissions had to be emphasised, including the need to desist from using fossil fuels to heat buildings and power fleet;
- there was a need for strong leadership and a necessity that Member decisions aligned with climate commitments, including in areas where there were significant investments;
- overall, the Motion was asking Members to make a declaration of intent in line with previous declarations and a declaration of support to the direction of travel which had already been taken;
- the time was right for the Council to look closely at what it was doing and change direction in some areas of investment if necessary;
- it had been stated that at least £40m of the Council's current investments were in the top list of negative fossil fuel users and this now had to be reviewed in order to lead by example;
- it was also suggested that there should be a review of any investments in armaments;
- it was absolutely right for the Council to re-affirm its commitment to a net zero target but it also had to be acknowledged that Pension Fund management was a huge responsibility. In that regard, decisions could have long term repercussions and impacts which might not be known until future years so there was a need to act decisively but also carefully;
- on the basis that the Pensions Committee and Investment Sub Committee had already set out proposals to deliver on a net zero target, and whilst agreeing with the principles behind the Motion which had been submitted, it was felt that there was a need to put forward an amendment in the following terms (which would actually achieve more than what was being asked for

within the terms of Motion) - to recognise the continuing, serious and accelerating changes caused by climate change and to continue to work towards a carbon neutral Highlands by 2025, acknowledge that the pandemic had reversed progress in some areas, e.g. in increased use of single-use plastics and discouragement of shared transport, recognise that, as a major investor in many hundreds of listed companies, the Highland Council Pension Fund had the responsibility and capacity to be an active shareholder, challenging the management teams of those companies invested in to act in ethical and responsible manner in all their dealings, not least in how they responded to climate change. Also, to note that successful climate action might lead the Fund to invest in businesses that were fostering rapid change (some of whom might be significant carbon emitters initially), note that the Highland Council Pension Committee must have regard to the Council's fiduciary duty as administering authority for the Pension Fund and recognise that this duty was consistent with selecting investments according to ethical, environmental, social and governance criteria as well as financial return. Further, to welcome the arrangement in September of workshops to develop and publish the Responsible Investing Policy Statement proposed in the Statement of Investment Principles adopted by the Pension Committee on 18 March 2021, to recognise that the Pension Fund had started 2021 with a very low greenhouse gas intensity from its shareholdings, approximately half that of an average global investment portfolio, to note that the Fund had, in the course of 2021, now transitioned circa half of its actively managed shareholdings to be run on a Paris Accord-Aligned basis which had reduced the already low greenhouse gas intensity even further and to recognise that the Pension Fund's Paris Accord-Aligned portfolio would not rest at that already low level and would deliver an approximate 7% year-on-year reduction in greenhouse gas intensity from its investments in line with the target reductions set out by the IPCC in 2018 in order to achieve a rapid pathway to net zero and limit global warming to 1.5% by 2050;

- the primary function of the Pensions Committee was to carry out its fiduciary duties to protect the interests of members and it had to have as much flexibility as necessary in that regard;
- it had to be acknowledged that many of the companies involved with fossil fuels were also leaders in the development of renewables and continued to make a significant commitment to decarbonising;
- reference had been made to armaments as 'socially harmful products' but it had to be highlighted that firearms were very often required to save lives, including within the Highlands;
- there should be a recognition and inclusion of humanitarian duties alongside other considerations within this issue in order to fully address the ideals of corporate accountability;
- it had been stated during the discussion that the Motion was being brought forward on behalf of another campaigning group but it had to be highlighted that taking a political decision and enacting it in the independent Pension forum had been found previously to have been a clear breach of fiduciary duties and there could therefore be unintended consequences;
- the motivation behind the submission of the Motion was completely understood and the debate had been very useful and informative; and
- all Members of the Council were encouraged to attend future meetings of both the Pensions Committee and the Investment Sub Committee in order to gain more information on the issues which had been discussed during the debate.

Thereafter, and in view of the debate which had been undertaken, it was agreed that the terms of the amendment were acceptable to all and should be taken forward.

## **Decision**

The Council **AGREED** as follows:-

- to recognise the continuing, serious and accelerating changes caused by climate change and to continue to work towards a carbon neutral Highlands by 2025;
- to acknowledge that the pandemic had reversed progress in some areas, for example, in increased use of single-use plastics and discouragement of shared transport;
- to recognise that as a major investor in many hundreds of listed companies, the Highland Council Pension Fund had the responsibility and capacity to be an active shareholder, challenging the management teams of those companies invested in to act in ethical and responsible manner in all their dealings, not least in how they responded to climate change;
- to note that successful climate action might lead the Fund to invest in businesses that were fostering rapid change, some of whom might be significant carbon emitters initially;
- to note that the Highland Council Pension Committee must have regard to the Council's fiduciary duty as administering authority for the Pension Fund and recognise that this duty was consistent with selecting investments according to ethical, environmental, social and governance criteria as well as financial return;
- to welcome the arrangement in September of workshops to develop and publish the Responsible Investing Policy Statement proposed in the Statement of Investment Principles adopted by the Pension Committee on 18 March 2021.
- to recognise that the Pension Fund had started 2021 with a very low greenhouse gas intensity from its shareholdings, approximately half that of an average global investment portfolio;
- to note that the Fund had, in the course of 2021, now transitioned circa half of its actively managed shareholdings to be run on a Paris Accord-Aligned basis which had reduced the already low greenhouse gas intensity even further; and
- to recognise that the Pension Fund's Paris Accord-Aligned portfolio would not rest at that already low level and would deliver an approximate 7% year-on-year reduction in greenhouse gas intensity from its investments in line with the target reductions set out in by the IPCC in 2018 in order to achieve a rapid pathway to net-zero and limit global warming to 1.5% by 2050.

**(iii) Capital Spend** - a key aspect of any capital project is the life cycle of that project, to enable the best value and return for the Council's spend. One of the major aspects to the life cycle of any project is good and well planned maintenance which enhances and preserves that asset, which in the long term is a spend to save for the Council. There must be a maintenance plan for every capital project which includes an estimate of the maintenance through the life cycle of that asset.

'Within the Council's new Capital Build Programme, this Council will commit and ensure that fully costed maintenance programmes for all new built projects are

budgeted for, to maintain and enhance the life cycle of the Council's assets, and duly planned and maintained as programmed.

Signed: Mr B Boyd      Dr I Cockburn

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the intention behind the Motion was to improve the maintenance of Council assets and save time, money and effort in that regard;
- maintenance should be a key issue for all assets, not least in terms of keeping the value of the asset, and it was hoped that maintenance programmes and schedules could be put in place for all Council assets if this had not already been done;
- the issues which had been raised were extremely important and, following discussion, amendments were now proposed to strengthen the Motion so that it would read as follows – Capital Spend - a key aspect of any capital project is the life cycle of that project to enable the best value and return for the Council's spend. One of the major aspects to the life cycle of any project is good and well-planned maintenance which enhances and preserves that asset which in the long term is a spend to save for the Council. There must be a maintenance plan for every asset which includes an estimate of the maintenance through the life cycle of that asset. This Council will commit to working towards an appropriately costed maintenance programme for all assets to maintain and enhance their life cycle and that programme will be duly planned and maintained as programmed, the potential implications of that maintenance programme will be included in a report to a forthcoming Corporate Resources Committee meeting;
- it was imperative that decisions in relation to the Capital Programme were based on the best available evidence; and
- there had been previous concerns raised in relation to Listed Buildings (and specifically restrictions on what could be provided for the tenants who lived in such buildings) and as such the terms of the Motion were welcomed.

### **Decision**

The Council **AGREED** as follows:-

Capital Spend - a key aspect of any capital project is the life cycle of that project to enable the best value and return for the Council's spend. One of the major aspects to the life cycle of any project is good and well-planned maintenance which enhances and preserves that asset which in the long term is a spend to save for the Council. There must be a maintenance plan for every asset which includes an estimate of the maintenance through the life cycle of that asset.

This Council will commit to working towards an appropriately costed maintenance programme for all assets to maintain and enhance their life cycle and that programme will be duly planned and maintained as programmed, the potential implications of that maintenance programme will be included in a report to a forthcoming Resources Committee meeting.

## **11. Future Highlands – Health and Prosperity Strategic Partnership Plan Plana Com-pàirteachas Ro-innleachdail Slàinte is Soirbheis**

**Declarations of Interest – Mr A Christie (as a Non-Executive Director of NHS Highland), Mr K Gowans (as an employee of Inverness College/UHI) and Mrs C Caddick (as a Board Member of the Cairngorms National Park Authority)**

**declared financial interests in this item 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 D Rixson (as the Council nominee on the Lochaber Housing Association, the Lochaber Environmental Group and the Isle of Rum Community Trust and as a Director of Highland Opportunity Investments Limited and the Secretary of the Mallaig Heritage Centre), Mr C MacLeod (as a Director of the Skye & Lochalsh Citizens Advice Bureau) and Mr A Jarvie and Mr B Thompson (as Directors of High Life Highland) declared non-financial interests and concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No. HC/20/21 dated 30 August 2021 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the Cairngorms National Park Authority, the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI) and other relevant partner organisations should be included in future reports, with examples provided of the importance of their roles in the fulfilment of the Health and Prosperity Strategic Partnership Plan and the need for a shared vision;
- the role of the UHI as the major tertiary education provider in the region was emphasised, with particular reference to the need to ensure that young people in the Highlands were adequately skilled for local industries and to provide clear pathways for them from an early stage;
- there was support for the work of the Cromarty First Port Authority as part of the Opportunity Cromarty Firth consortium and their plans to apply for Greenport/Freeport status which would have benefits for the whole of the Highlands. Reference was also made to the importance of developing the hydrogen agenda, particularly to improve research and reduce production costs, as part of tackling climate change and it was hoped that off-shore wind turbines might be used to produce green hydrogen in future;
- the housing shortage was one of the most critical issues facing the Highlands at present with an urgent need for housing for key workers and many local business employees, especially in remote and rural areas. The impact of the housing shortage on the recruitment and retention of workforce in many sectors was also highlighted and whilst there were examples of early collaborative work which was taking place with partners and major employers, this was needed at an increased pace. There was also a need to regulate rent levels and holiday home usage;
- the proposal which was being submitted to the Scottish Government for a Skye-based Scottish centre of excellence for remote, rural and island healthcare and digital innovation was a good fit with priorities 2 and 3 of the Strategic Partnership, 'Health - Care Innovation' and 'People – Living Healthy, Thriving and Inclusive Lives';
- de-population was a significant issue facing communities across Highland areas, including Caithness where initiatives were in place to try to address this issue, and there was also a need for a focus on the urgent need for better broadband connections and transport links which were vital;
- in terms of the large numbers of jobs which were likely to be available in renewables and the potential in the Highlands to develop this sector, it was important that input was sought from both the Scottish and UK Governments in this respect; and

- with reference to the Cairngorms National Park peatland review, this should also be considered by the Council as part of the vision for the Highlands.

### **Decision**

Members:-

- (i) **APPROVED** the development of a Future Highlands Strategy, including further engagement with partners, and for the draft strategy to come to the full Council meeting in October 2021;
- (ii) **NOTED** that recommendations for investment were contained in the report on the Medium Term Financial Plan – Update; and
- (iii) **AGREED** that reference to the Cairngorms National Park Authority, the University of the Highland and Islands, and any other relevant partner organisations should be included in future reports.

## **12. Medium Term Financial Plan – Update Planadh Ionmhasail Meadhan-ùine**

**Declarations of Interest – Mr D Rixson (as the Council’s nominee on the Lochaber Housing Association, the Lochaber Environmental Group and the Isle of Rum Community Trust and also as a Director of Highland Opportunities Investments Limited and the Secretary of the Mallaig Heritage Centre), Mr J McGillivray (as a Director of the Dornoch Area Community Interest Company) and Mr A Jarvie and Mr B Thompson (as Directors of High Life Highland) declared non-financial interests in this item 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 Report No. HC/21/21 dated 24 August 2021 by Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- there was a need to highlight the mid-term position on future savings and the uncertainties and assumptions incorporated in the report, which included pay awards, the outcomes of Brexit, the impact of the Covid recovery process and the lack of a multi-year funding settlement;
- it was noted that the link between capital, revenue and affordability would be the subject of a further report in October 2021;
- positive issues included the update on the play area situation, the proposed £2.8m for a Green Energy Hub feasibility study, the continuation of Visitor Management Plan interventions, the capital investment confirmation for five schools and plans to consider capacity issues for Inverness East.;
- there was support for the proposed £2.8m towards the development costs for a Green Energy Hub. In this respect, the importance of thorough research and sufficient staff resources was emphasised given the significant investment which a Hub would require (£85-£195m) and it would be vital for the process to be reported on regularly and with transparency;
- the five schools which had been confirmed as priorities for capital investment were welcomed but attention was also drawn to the many other schools across the Highlands which required investment, noting the extent of the Highland school estate in comparison to some Local Authorities and the harsh weather experienced across the area. Particular reference was made to the



need to expedite the statutory consultation for St Clements School and tribute was paid to the Officers who had worked on preparing the projects;

- further investment in roads was required, noting that £20m was required to maintain a steady state and this level of funding was only in place for the coming two years;
- the dilemma around loan charges was acknowledged, as was the ongoing budget gap of around £15m;
- the Scottish Government's commitment of £234k to Highland play parks was welcomed, although it was pointed out that, in March 2021, it had been estimated that the minimum play park refurbishment cost for Lochaber alone was £936k and £3.75m for the Highlands as a whole;
- on the basis that investment requirements for the coming ten years were due to be identified after the Capital Programme was approved in October, it was suggested that a medium term requirement analysis should be developed as early as possible and that all Members should be invited to contribute, with examples provided of some of the significant investment decisions facing the Council;
- the proposal to develop a £1m cash-backed Community Loans Fund was welcomed and in this respect attention was drawn to a car park development project which was experiencing a shortfall in funding and would benefit from the use of the Community Loans Fund, perhaps through delegation to Local Members and Officers who could facilitate the completion of the project;
- attention was also drawn to an innovative play park ranger project in the Cromarty Firth Ward which would benefit from match funding from the Council at the budget review in February 2022;
- it was suggested the Waste Strategy Working Group should give consideration to a 'recycling shed' project, where people could exchange and re-use waste material or items;
- it was hoped that the Park Primary School building would be demolished and rebuilt as soon as possible;
- the continued funding for the Visitor Management Plan was welcomed;
- there was support for the Energy from Waste plant which would save around £8m per year in landfill tax. In this respect, excess energy could be sold to other energy users;
- Members were urged to attend appropriate meetings for capital projects they wished to be involved with; and
- a play park strategy was required to facilitate the play park review.

### **Decision**

Members:-

- (i) **NOTED** the medium term financial planning assumptions as described in Section 5 of the report;
- (ii) **AGREED** to provide funding from the Council's General Fund non-earmarked reserves for the investment requirements linked to the 'Future Highlands - Health and Prosperity Strategic Partnership Plan' as described in Section 7 of the report for the Green Energy Hub, Visitor Management and Community Loans Fund;
- (iii) **AGREED** the scope, budget, phasing and timescale for the five capital projects described in Section 9 and Appendix 5 of the report and agreed that these be incorporated into the Council's current Capital Programme;
- (iv) **AGREED** that the fire-damaged main building at the Park Primary site should be demolished;

- (v) **AGREED** the priority for a bid to the next phase of the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Investment Programme at Sections 9.9 and 9.10 and Appendix 5 of the report should be East Inverness; and
- (vi) **AGREED** that, while progress on the five priorities for Schools Capital Investment would be monitored through the Housing and Property Committee, updates would also be provided to the Education Committee for noting.

### 13. **Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR) Improvement Plan Progress Report** **Sgrùdadh Luaich as Fheàrr – Aithisg Adhartais**

**Declarations of Interest – Mr A Jarvie and Mr B Thompson 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.**

There had been circulated Report No. HC/22/21 dated 16 August 2021 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- whilst it had been expected that there would be some slippage as a result of Covid-19, there were some key areas of concern where it had been thought that there would have been improvement by this point in the pandemic, including a reflective response on actions which had been taken and, specifically in terms of ensuring good governance, further financial training for Members. In this latter regard, it was suggested that such training should be scheduled in advance of March 2022 if possible so that it was undertaken before the new Council was elected in May of that year;
- thanks were conveyed to the Accounts Commission for the recommendations which had been received and also to the staff who had worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic;
- it was confirmed that Members could ask for additional training whenever and wherever required;
- in noting that the Community Planning Partnership approach to locality planning was under review and that proposals included streamlining and simplifying the approach across Highland for more effective delivery against outcomes by creating one clear set of priorities for each Community Partnership which were measurable and reportable for community and wider scrutiny, further information would be helpful in future as to how this could be achieved and made applicable to all when the Council did not lead on every Community Planning Partnership and/or every Locality Plan;
- in order to address the issues in relation to knowledge, expertise, awareness and training which had been raised, it was suggested that it would be extremely helpful if a Workshop for Members on the Financial Impact of the Council's Capital Programme could be arranged as soon as possible; and
- it was suggested that the feedback from the previous week's Community Planning Partnership Seminar should also be taken into account as a number of pertinent and very valid issues had been raised at that time.

#### **Decision**

The Council:-

- (i) **NOTED** the progress as detailed;

- (ii) **AGREED** the revisions to timelines required to complete the delivery of the improvement plan as detailed in Appendix 1; and
- (iii) **AGREED** to amend 3.2, Appendix 1 as detailed in Paragraph 5.4 of the report to remove the need for external learning to be through visits.

#### **14. Annual Corporate Performance Report 2020/21 Aithisg Choileanaidh Bhliadhnaidh**

##### **Declarations of Interest –**

**Mr A Christie (as a Non-Executive Director of NHS Highland), Mr K Gowans (on the basis that a close family member was an employee of High Life Highland) and Mr A Jarvie (as an employee of Inclusion Scotland and on the basis that a close family member was a teacher) declared financial interests in this item but, having applied the test outlined in the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.**

**Mr T Heggie, Mr A Jarvie and Mr B Thompson (as Directors of High Life Highland) declared non-financial interests and, having applied the test, confirmed that they would also take part in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No. HC/23/21 dated 17 August 2021 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- thanks were conveyed to all staff for the extraordinary work which had been undertaken in response to Covid-19, not least in terms of the speed in which they had mobilised into action. In this regard, it was confirmed that future reports on continuing progress across a range of issues would be submitted to the Recovery, Improvement and Transformation Board, Strategic Committees and the full Council;
- in respect of the information for educational attainment, it should be noted that there was a time lag with the statistics which had been presented but progress was now being made and this would be reported through the Education Committee;
- in acknowledging that continuous improvement was essential, it was felt that there was a need to highlight points of excellence contained within the report;
- in relation to the section entitled 'A Place To Thrive', thanks were conveyed to all teaching staff for what had been achieved during the pandemic and not least the risk assessments undertaken on buildings in order to ensure that all learning facilities were safe;
- there was concern about the level 5 attainment of children from deprived backgrounds whereby the national average was 47% as compared to 37% for Highland Council and it was hoped that improvements could be made to this figure;
- in relation to the overall total tariff scores in regard to looked after children, these were also below the national average (some significantly) and it was hoped that this could be improved upon, perhaps through a benchmarking exercise with other areas which were achieving better outcomes;
- also in regard to looked after children, there was a reduction in accommodation having to be located outwith the Highland area which was welcomed and it was queried as to whether there was a similar focus on foster care outwith the area;

- there was some concern about the quality and relativity of the education figures which had been presented. In this respect, it was highlighted that some of these figures (but not all) had been submitted to the Education Committee in the previous week but a complete set of figures had then subsequently been published in full in the local press as part of a larger and more comprehensive report on the whole of the North of Scotland. Specifically, it was suggested that there was now a need for further consideration of a radical change in how education was delivered in the Highlands in order to improve on the current attainment figures, including information on the number of teachers who had been trained on Additional Support Needs and the percentage of Pupil Support Assistants who had been moved from classrooms;
- further clarification was also sought on the proposed removal of indicators as detailed within Section 7 of the report;
- there was a need to put on record the thanks of local communities to the Council for the services which had been provided during the pandemic, including the delivery of food on a regular and ongoing basis which was greatly appreciated by all;
- there was disappointment at some of the inaccurate issues which had been raised during the discussion and Officers would be asked to provide accurate and updated information for all Members to highlight the widespread and positive progress which continued to be achieved within schools, including attainment levels. As such, there was once again a need to commend all staff within schools for what they had delivered over the past months and the outcomes which had been achieved in very difficult circumstances; and
- in relation to looked after children, it was essential to recognise the progress which had been made to date through collaborative working and, whilst acknowledging that improvements could always be made, extensive thanks were conveyed to the staff involved in this area of work.

### **Decision**

Members:-

- (i) **NOTED** the progress being made with the delivery of the Corporate Plan for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021;
- (ii) **AGREED** the changes proposed to performance indicators and actions targets as outlined at Section 6 of the report;
- (iii) **NOTED** the Council's response and work towards recovery from the Covid-19 emergency during 2020/21;
- (iv) **AGREED** to await a further report on Statutory Performance Indicators and the Local Government Benchmarking Framework no later than March 2022; and
- (v) **NOTED** that it was not possible to carry out the Annual Performance and Attitudes Survey due to Covid-19 and that the Citizen's Panel was being refreshed with a Survey planned again in 2022.

### **15. National Care Service for Scotland Consultation Cùram Sòisealta – Aithisg Cho-chomhairleachaidh**

There had been circulated Report No. HC/24/21 dated 20 August 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer Health & Social Care.

**Declarations of Interest – Mr A Christie (as a Non-Executive Director of NHS Highland) and Mr A Jarvie (as an employee of Inclusion Scotland) both declared financial interests in this item 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.**

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- this was an extremely important issue for the Council and as Seminars would be arranged and reports submitted to future meetings, including to the next full Council meeting in October. In this respect, the agreement by the Scottish Government to an extension to the consultation period was welcomed;
- there was agreement with the term of a press release from CoSLA which, whilst welcoming large parts of the Independent Review of Adult Social Care, had also expressed concern about the scope of the consultation (which it was felt went well beyond the Feely Report), the centralising approach which it was being proposed to be taken in future in respect of decisions which were currently being made locally, the lack of evidence provided within the consultation and lack of prior communication with Local Authorities;
- it was felt that the inclusion of Children's Services was particularly concerning as these were the services which needed to be 'closer to the ground' and often dealt with most urgently and on a local basis;
- there had to be further detail on these proposals before any further action was taken, not least in terms of finance;
- it was imperative that close and detailed discussion was undertaken on the potential implications for the Highlands. Including what opportunities might be available in the future;
- it had to be recognised that the Council now had a much improved relationship with NHS Highland and as such it was essential that good practice was spread and articulated across the Highland area;
- in stressing that local services had to be decided on and delivered at a local level as much as possible, this placed an even greater onus on the Highland Council to produce an alternative to what was being proposed. In this regard, account had to be taken of the fact that the current system was different from other parts of the country and also that it was not considered to be working well in some respects at present;
- the main priority in the setting up of care arrangements had to be the delivery of care to those who needed it most and not based on the current status of the relationship with NHS Highland;
- the current arrangements for scrutiny and/or oversight by Members in respect of the delivery of care across the Highlands were not considered to be adequate at present;
- in welcoming the consultation process in relation to a potential change in the strategy for the delivery of health and social care, there was concern about the use of the term 'centralisation'. As such, it was suggested that this was instead an opportunity to share a new care system and all Members were encouraged to attend consultation meetings as and when possible;
- it was recognised that there was tension at present between 'post code lotteries' and having full control and a balance would have to be found. In this regard, it was essential that this focused on what could be delivered for the citizens of the Highlands;
- it had to be recognised that there were huge geographical challenges across the Highland area and it was essential that some areas of care were not centralised and decisions continued to be made locally;
- it was undoubtedly the case that there was now a huge backlog in the delivery of care as a result of Covid-19, including in children's services, and this would require careful consideration as 'one size would not fit all';
- it would be extremely important to ensure that the Third Sector representatives were included within the consultation process and future discussions;

- it was suggested that the relevant staff should also be included where necessary in the consultation process, perhaps through the Redesign Board, in order to ensure a focus on 'person centred' and integrated outcomes;
- it was acknowledged that the current system was 'broken' in some respects and that this had been the case for a long time. However, change was coming and, whilst it was not felt that a national system would work for remote and rural areas, it was vital that the consultation process was used to influence that change for the benefit of communities across the Highlands;
- in terms of the Care Home sector, and with specific reference to the lessons which had to be learned from what had happened during the pandemic, the Feely Report had submitted proposals with the aim of making this a more attractive place for staff to work in and it was not felt that this could have been done locally. In that respect, and with specific reference to the staff who worked in this sector, there had to be focus on desired outcomes, such as providing the best level of pay and conditions possible in the future;
- the importance of the transition period had to be highlighted as there would be challenges ahead within the consultation and as such the transition would be just as important as the destination;
- it would be essential to ensure that the right people were involved in this consultation and that their views were taken into account and this included unpaid carers, Third Sector reps, staff within Care Homes and the caring community generally. As such, it was felt that the thanks of all concerned should be conveyed to the caring community for what they had achieved in past months; and
- it was imperative that more detail was provided during the consultation as this would be vital to achieving the best outcomes for the Highland area, and not least remote and rural areas.

### **Decision**

The Council:-

- (i) **NOTED** the proposals set out in the consultation and **AGREED** the approach set out within Section 5 of the report;
- (ii) **NOTED** the need to engage with staff, trade unions and Members and with key partners including NHS Highland and other third party stakeholders in terms of informing a response to this consultation;
- (iii) **AGREED** that the Chief Social Work Officer should provide a professional response to the questions highlighting possible impacts to service delivery and Council performance which would then be considered as part of the process set out in recommendation (i) above;
- (iv) **AGREED** the draft response should come to the Council at the next scheduled meeting on 28 October; and
- (v) **AGREED** that there be continuing engagement with CoSLA in terms of the impact the consultation might have on Local Authority functions going forward.

### **16. Timetable of Meetings – 2022 Clàr-ama Choinneamhan – 2022**

There had been circulated the Timetable of Meetings for 2022 as follows -

January to April (inclusive) – **APPROVED**.

May to December (inclusive) – **APPROVED in PRINCIPLE** – on the basis that the new Council would determine the final dates of meetings for the remainder of the year after the May Election.

**17. Deeds Executed**  
**Sgrìobhainnean Lagha a Bhuilicheadh**

It was **NOTED** that a list of deeds and other documents executed on behalf of the Council since the meeting held on 24 June 2021 were available on the Council's Website.

**18. Exclusion of the Public**  
**Às-dùnadh a' Phobail**

The Council **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public should be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

**19. Holiday Pay – Back Pay**  
**Ais-Phàigheadh Shaor-làithean**

There had been circulated to Members only Report No. HC/25/21 dated 24 August 2021 by Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance.

**Decision**

Following discussion, the Council **AGREED** the recommendation as detailed in the report.

The meeting ended at 3.45pm.