

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Waste Strategy Working Group** held remotely on Friday 24 March 2023 at 10.30 am.

Present:-

Mr J Bruce
Mr R Gale
Mr A Graham

Mrs J Hendry
Mr G MacKenzie
Mr H Morrison

In attendance:-

Mr A Gunn, Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place
Mr A McKinnie, Strategic Lead, Waste Services, Communities and Place
Mr S Graham, Project Manager, Communities and Place
Mrs O Bayon, Committee Officer, Corporate Governance

Mr G Mackenzie in the Chair

Preliminaries

The Chair announced the Good News that Highland Council had been awarded the £6.5million Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund from the Scottish Government Zero Waste Scotland. In addition, congratulations and thanks were conveyed to the team for their hard work and meticulous preparation of the successful application.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr A Baldrey and Mr L Fraser.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Waste Strategy Working Group held on 19 January 2023, which were approved by the Communities and Place Committee on 23 February 2023, were circulated and **NOTED**.

4. Waste Projects Update

There had been circulated WS/2/23 dated 17 March 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- a further guided tour of the Longman waste transfer station when it was fully operational was requested. In this regard it was confirmed that this was already in-hand;

- Members requested a copy of the press release statement regarding the £6.5million funding award from the Scottish Government;
- it was queried if the HC would issue a press release statement and social media coverage regarding the funding award. In this regard it was confirmed that the Highland Council would follow the Scottish Governments communications protocol;
- £275,000 had been budgeted for communication processes and communications with the public should include how the £6.5million would be spent, the benefits of the whole recycling process and the food waste process;
- attention was drawn to the condition of the Sutherland area refuse collection vehicles and it was felt they would benefit from future investment;
- information was sought, and provided, whether roadside collections on the NC500 would continue in 2023/24 as it had made a big difference to the local area. In this regard it was confirmed that the roadside collections funding would not be available but the Service would do their best to respond to issues as efficiently as possible;
- the application process included a detailed project plan outlining what would happen between now and 2025/26, when the phased implementation of the various changed would begin. A high-level copy of the project plan would be shared with Members and the Communities and Place Committee;
- it was confirmed that an officer project board was already in place to oversee the project's delivery. This team included a sponsor, a lead and a project manager; and
- it was anticipated that the Chair would meet with the Chair of Education and the Chair of Housing and Property to discuss food waste costs which were deemed unsustainable.

The Working Group **NOTED**:-

- i. the positive staffing news regarding Inverness waste transfer station;
- ii. that officers were working towards a number of important target information and application submissions to progress intentions to develop a waste transfer station at Fort William;
- iii. that the Council awaited notification as to whether its application to the Recycling Fund had been successful.
- iv. that Highland Council support funding for three mobile shredders for treating bulky waste had been secured;
- v. that a feasibility study would be undertaken into the practicality and viability of a Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle Pathfinder project in the Nairn household waste recycling centre;
- vi. that at the Council on 9 March 2023 it was resolved to form a stakeholder group to examine how to increase repair and reuse in the Highlands and what was needed to grow the sector;
- vii. the consultancy was underway to provide an updated perspective on the feasibility and viability of long-term waste management options for The Highland Council; and
- viii. that a high-level copy of the project plan would be shared with Members and the Communities and Place Committee;

The meeting ended at: 11:30am