

Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer (MC)
 Ms R Banfro, Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk
 Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

Also in Attendance:

Ms S Meyer (Third Party)
 Ms J Nicolson, SSEN
 Ms L Riach, SSEN
 Mr S Robertson, SSEN
 Mr A Robinson (Third Party)
 Mr P Smith (Third Party)

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<p>Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan</p> <p>Apologies were intimated on behalf of Mr R Bremner.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</p> <p>The Committee noted the following declaration of interest: -</p> <p>Ms J MacEwan – Item 6.4, Item 6.5</p>	
	<p>At this stage it was brought to Members attention that item 6.10 had been withdrawn from the agenda due to a procedural error relating to the boundaries of the site. Members were advised that further investigation of the site boundaries was required by the applicant before the application was re-advertised and re-circulated prior to prior to the item being bought back to a future planning committee for consideration .</p>	Karolina Slotwinski
3	<p>Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a’ Gheàrr-chunntais</p> <p>There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the North Planning Applications Committee held on 6 December 2024; and ii. the Special Meeting of the North Planning applications Committee held on 17 January 2024 <p>which were APPROVED.</p>	
4	<p>Major Development Update Iartasan Mòra</p> <p>There had been circulated Report No PLN/001/23 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the “Major” development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment</p>	DJ

	<p>Service for determination.</p> <p>During discussion an update on when the application for Land 320M SW Of Tore Roundabout Tore Muir of Ord was due to be determined was requested. Members were advised that further information had been requested and received by the case officer at the end of 2023. The application continued to be progressed and the timetable would be adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.</p>	
5	Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais	
5.1	<p>Description: Construction of vertical launch spaceport with launch operations control centre, site integration facility, launch pad complex, antenna park, access road, fencing, services and associated infrastructure. (23/05374/PAN) (PLN/003/24)</p> <p>Ward: 01 - North, West and Central Sutherland</p> <p>Applicant: Sutherland Spaceport Ltd.</p> <p>Site Address: Land 2600M SW of Dunbuie Talmine Tongue.</p>	MK
5.2	<p>Description: The construction and operation of a battery energy storage unit with a maximum installed capacity of 49.9 Megawatts consisting of up to 50 energy storage units and associated electrical equipment sited on a hardstanding within a fenced compound surrounded by peripheral screening landscaping, designed to deliver a net gain in biodiversity. (23/05455/PAN) (PLN/004/24)</p> <p>Ward: 02 – Thurso and North West Caithness</p> <p>Applicant: Whirlwind Renewables</p> <p>Site Address: Land 530M South of Geiselittle Farm, Thurso.</p> <p>During discussion Cllr Reiss highlighted the proximity of this application to the Thurso River.</p>	MK
5.3	<p>Description: Ackron Farm - The Proposed Development will comprise of 11 turbines with maximum tip heights of 200m, a battery energy storage System (BESS) and associated access and ancillary infrastructure (23/05499/PAN) (PLN/005/24)</p> <p>Ward: 01 –North West and Central Sutherland</p> <p>Applicant: Ackron Windfarm</p> <p>Site Address: Land 1575M NE Of Ackron Farm, Golval, Forsinard.</p> <p>During discussion the safety issues surrounding battery storage were raised and it was confirmed that a letter to the Scottish government concerning this has been drafted and would be circulated to NPAC members.</p>	DJ
6	Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
6.1	<p>Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (23/00070/FUL) (PLN/006/24)</p>	RD

Location: Land 1120m West of Glenvicaskill, Balmeanach, Struan (Ward 10).

Nature of Development: Extension of Edinbane Substation including creation of substation platform, substation buildings, SUDS basin, realignment of track, formation of access junction, temporary construction compound, landscaping and other ancillary works.

Recommendation: GRANT

A pre-determination hearing was held in respect of this item at which the applicant and 3 objectors were present. Parties spoke in support of the application and their representations and were asked questions by members. At the conclusion of the hearing, parties confirmed that they were satisfied with the way the hearing had been conducted.

Mr R Dowell, Principal Planner drew members attention to the following corrections to the report:-

In section 3 of condition 21 the reference made to 7,500 cubic metres of Peat was corrected to 40,000 cubic metres; and the wording for condition 21 and reasoned conclusion was updated to include an overview of significant effects during the Construction period:

Motion: Mr D Millar seconded by Mr K Rosie.

To grant the application subject to the conditions laid out in the report.

Amendment: Mr R Stewart seconded by Mrs M Paterson.

I move that the application is refused on the following grounds.
A 10% BNG cannot be demonstrated without relying on the Skye reinforcement project which the council has planning authority has raised objection to as such this proposal cannot be assessed on its own merits to accord with policy 3 of NPF4.

Additionally due to large size of the buildings and density of the proposed development in my assessment this will have a significant and detrimental impact on amenity 8.28 of the report acknowledges the development is 'stark within the wider open moorland' and in my assessment this proposal represents a detrimental contribution to the architectural and visual quality of the area and as such is contrary to policy 28 & 29 of HwLDP.

There were 9 votes for the motion and 4 votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:

For the Motion: Ms S Atkin, Mr M Baird, Ms L Kraft, Ms A MacLean, Mr D Millar, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mr K Rosie, Ms M Smith.

For the Amendment: Mr R Gale, Ms J McEwan, Mrs M Paterson, Mr R Stewart.

The Committee **AGREED to GRANT** planning permission subject to the conditions the drafting of the final wording of conditions being delegated to Officers.

6.2	<p>Applicant: Kirkton Energy Farm Ltd (22/05533/S36) (PLN/007/24) Location: Land 1800m SW of Kirkton Cemetery, Melvich (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Erection and operation of a wind farm comprising of 11 wind turbines of up to 149.9m blade tip height, battery energy storage system, access tracks, substation, control building, 2 borrow pits, temporary construction compound and associated development for a period of 30 years. Recommendation: RAISE AN OBJECTION</p> <p>Visualisation packs, prepared by the applicant were circulated at the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to RAISE AN OBJECTION to the application for the reasons detailed in the report.</p>	MK
6.3	<p>Applicant: Highland Wind Limited (23/05263/S36) (PLN/008/24) Location: Development Site 9KM NW Of Dounreay Nuclear Research Establishment, Dounreay (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Pentland Offshore Wind Farm redesign - Erection and Operation of an offshore floating wind farm for a period of 25 years, comprising up to 6 floating wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 300m, associated floating substructures with mooring lines and anchors / piles, inter-array cables, 2 export cables, landfall, and associated scour and cable protection measures. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to RAISE NO OBJECTION to the application.</p>	MK
6.4	<p>Declaration of Interest: Ms J MacEwan declared an interest in this item as the author of the report was a close family member.</p> <p>Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission PLC (23/05019/S37) (PLN/009/24) Location: Land 1170M SE Of Tressady, 104 Toroboll, Lairg (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Installation of 3no 132 kV downleads connecting associated underground cable into the existing 132 kV overhead line with ancillary infrastructure including a cable sealing end compound (CSEC), bellmouth access, temporary laydown and construction area. Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to RAISE NO OBJECTION to the application.</p>	CF
6.5	<p>Declaration of Interest: Ms J MacEwan declared an interest in this item as the author of the report was a close family member.</p> <p>Applicant: Abbey Properties Cambridgeshire Limited (20/04455/FUL) (PLN/010/24) Location: Wind Farm Borrowstone Mains, Forss, Thurso (Ward 02). Nature of Development: Forss III Wind Farm - Erection and operation of one turbine with a max tip height of 100m, access tracks, sub-station, transformer unit and ancillary infrastructure</p>	CF

	<p>Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application.</p>	
6.6	<p>Applicant: Bettyhill 2 Wind Limited (23/00142/FUL) (PLN/011/24) Location: Land 2375M SE Of Cairnview Bettyhill Nature of Development: Bettyhill Wind Farm Phase 2 - Erection and operation of a wind farm comprising up to 10 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, substation compound including control building and battery energy storage system, access tracks, temporary borrow pits and construction compound, and ancillary infrastructure. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>Visualisation packs, prepared by the applicant, were circulated at the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to conditions the drafting of the final wording of the conditions being delegated to officers.</p>	MF
6.7	<p>Applicant: Mr & Mr Roderick & Stuart Thomas (23/00731/FUL) (PLN/012/24) Location: Land To East Of 7 Balmeanach, The Braes, Portree (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of 2no dwelling houses and associated works Recommendation: APPROVE</p> <p>Mr R Stewart moved that condition 3, in relation to the construction of out-buildings be removed. However, he failed to find a seconder and requested that his dissent be recorded.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to APPROVE the application subject to the conditions set out in the report.</p>	GS
6.8	<p>Applicant: Mrs Queenie Wu (23/03565/FUL) (PLN/013/24) Location: Land 20M NE Of Presbyterian Church Staffin Road Portree Isle Of Skye (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of 2 holiday letting units. Recommendation: APPROVE</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to APPROVE the application subject to the conditions set out in the report with additional footnotes to encourage the inclusion of EV charging points and a fence between the holiday units and the neighbouring property.</p>	GS
6.9	<p>Applicant: Mrs Maureen Davison (23/04440/FUL) (PLN/014/24) Location: 3 Colbost, Dunvegan, Isle Of Skye IV55 8ZT (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Siting of cabin for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the croft (retrospective). Recommendation: APPROVE</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to APPROVE the application subject to the conditions set out in the report.</p>	GS

6.11	<p>Applicant: Patrick and Maya Kurtz (20/01581/FUL) (PLN/016/24) Location: Skyefall Struan Isle of Skye IV56 8FA (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of house and formation of access. Recommendation: REFUSE</p> <p>Motion: Mr D Millar seconded by Ms B Campbell.</p> <p>To refuse the application.</p> <p>Amendment: Mr R Stewart seconded by Ms M Smith.</p> <p>To grant the application for the following reasons:-</p> <p>The proposed development demonstrates sensitive siting and high quality design in keeping with local character and historic and natural environment and in making use of appropriate materials by the use of natural materials such as slate and the exterior finish (white or off-white render) Given the modest scale of the development I contend this is acceptable in terms of siting and design as it is sympathetic to existing patterns of development within the local area and the proposal can be accommodated in the landscape. And notes that the proposed development will allow people to live, and stay in area. For these reasons I contend this proposal accords with policy 28, 36 of the HWLDP and policy 14 and 17 of NPF4.</p> <p>There were 11 votes for the motion and 4 votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:</p> <p>For the Motion: Ms S Atkin, Ms B Campbell, Ms T Collier, Mr R Gale, Ms L Kraft, Ms A MacLean, Ms J McEwan, Ms M Paterson, Mr A Rhind, Mr K Rosie</p> <p>For the Amendment: Mr M Baird, Ms M Smith, Mr M Reiss, Mr R Stewart.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to REFUSE the application.</p>	MH
6.12	<p>Applicant: North West Highlands Plumbing Services Ltd (23/03272/FUL) (PLN/017/24) Location: 2 Caberfeidh, Smoo, Durness, Lairg, IV27 4QA (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Erection of takeaway building. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the Conditions set out in the report.</p>	LB
6.13	<p>Applicant: Laura Fraser (23/04117/LBC) (PLN/018/24) Location: 1 Ankerville Street, Tain, IV19 1BH (Ward 07). Nature of Development: Installation of composite door. Recommendation: REFUSE</p> <p>Motion: Mr D Millar seconded by Ms A MacLean.</p> <p>To REFUSE the application.</p>	DJ

	<p>Amendment: Mr a Rhind seconded by Ms M Smith.</p> <p>To GRANT the application for the following reasons:-</p> <p>The proposed installation of a replacement composite door in this instance does not conflict with Section 14 of the Planning (Listed building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997; Policy 7 of the National Planning Framework 4; as well as policy 57 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan 2012.</p> <p>There were 6 votes for the motion and 8 votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:</p> <p>For the Motion: Ms S Atkin, Ms T Collier, Ms L Kraft, Ms A MacLean, Mr D Millar, Mr K Rosie.</p> <p>For the Amendment: Mr M Baird, Ms B Campbell, Mr R Gale, Ms J McEwan, Ms M Smith, Ms M Paterson, Mr A Rhind, Mr R Stewart.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to conditions the drafting of the final wording of the conditions being delegated to officers in consultation with Ward 7 NPAC members.</p>	
	<p>The meeting ended at 6.20pm</p>	

	Mr A Graham – Item 5.1 Mrs I MacKenzie – Item 6.2	n/a
3	Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais	
	There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 December 2023 which was APPROVED .	n/a
4	Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra	
	There had been circulated Report No PLS/01/24 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the “Major” development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination. Assurance was sought and provided that the Airport Railway Station was included in error as it was completed and operational. The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.	PW
5	Continued Items Cuspairean a' Leantainn	
5.1	This item was subject to a site visit which took place at 9.30am on 7 February 2024. Only Members present on 22 November 2023, and at the site visit, were entitled to participate. Declaration of Interest: Mr A Graham, due to his longstanding connections to Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club (as season ticket holder and member of the supporters' club), declared an interest in this item and left the chamber for the duration of the item. Applicant: Intelligent Land Investments Group Plc (23/00497/FUL) (PLS/02/24) Location: Land 75M SE Of Camas House, Fairways Business Park, Inverness (Ward 19). Nature of Development: Battery energy storage facility comprising access track, compound of battery and electrical equipment, meter building, stores, fencing, security cameras, and associated landscaping.. Recommendation: Refuse It was clarified that Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club was the applicant, via Intelligent Land Investments Group Plc. Motion: Mr T MacLennan, seconded by Mr P Oldham, to refuse the application as recommended in the report. Amendment: Mrs I MacKenzie, seconded by Mr R Jones to approve the application because, while it was acknowledged that the development would result in a loss of open space, the development would encourage, promote, and facilitate renewable energy storage and so would comply with policy 11 of NPF4. It was considered that the benefits gained under policy 11 of NPF4 outweighed the loss of open space and therefore the application should be	

	<p>granted, with powers delegated to officers in consultation with the Chair and members who had participated in the decision to develop the appropriate conditions.</p> <p>For the motion: Mr T MacLennan, Mr P Oldham (2)</p> <p>For the amendment: Mr D Fraser, Mr R Jones, Mrs I MacKenzie (3)</p>	
Notice of Amendment	<p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. to GRANT planning permission as detailed in Mrs MacKenzie’s amendment; and ii. to make representations to the Scottish Government in relation to the need for planning guidance on battery energy storage facilities. 	MF
5.2	<p>Only Members present for this item on 12 December 2023 were entitled to participate.</p> <p>Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (23/00520/FUL) (PLS/03/24) Location: Land at Drum Farm South of Fire Station, Drumnadrochit (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Amended drainage strategy (in retrospect). Recommendation: Grant.</p>	
	<p>Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report, and a further condition to monitor outfall for signs of invasive species, for a period of five years i.e. years 1, 3 and 5, with wording of the condition to be delegated to officers in consultation with local Members.</p>	KG
5.3	<p>Only Members present for this item on 12 December 2023 were entitled to participate.</p> <p>Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (23/00532/FUL and 23/00533/FUL) (PLS/04/24) Location: Land at Drum Farm South of Fire Station, Drumnadrochit (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Remix house types (21/03612/FUL). Recommendation: Grant.</p> <p>Motion: Mr D Fraser, seconded by Mr P Oldham, to refuse the application as the applicant had not sufficiently demonstrated the need to amend the phasing and rate of build, despite further evidence being requested by the South Planning Applications Committee, from that set out in the original planning permission (19/02761/FUL), and subsequent decisions, and was therefore contrary to the requirements of Inner Moray Firth Development Plan 2015, site allocation DR5 Drum Farm.</p> <p>Amendment: Mr T MacLennan, seconded by Mr K Gowans, to grant the application as recommended.</p> <p>For the motion: Mr D Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr A Graham, Mr R Jones, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr A MacKintosh, Mr P Oldham (7)</p> <p>For the amendment: Mr K Gowans, Mr T MacLennan (2)</p>	

	Agreed: to REFUSE planning permission for the reasons provided by Mr Fraser.	KG
6	Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
6.1	<p>Applicant: Energiekontor UK Ltd (22/01760/S36) (PLS/05/24) Location: Land 4035M SW of Bunloyne Farm, Glenmoriston (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Bunloinn Wind Farm - Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 35 years, comprising 10 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 230m, access tracks, borrow pits, battery energy storage system, substation, control building, and ancillary infrastructure. Recommendation: Raise No Objection</p> <p>Corrections were made to paragraphs 1.1 and 1.2 of the committee report, which referred to all of the 10 proposed turbines being up to 230m to blade tip. This was incorrect and a range of turbine heights were being proposed at between 200m and 230m. 6 turbines were at up to 230m to blade tip height, with the remaining 4 being up to 200m to blade tip. The central turbine nos. 2,3,4,5,8 and 9 were proposed to be the highest owing to their better containment.</p> <p>Motion: Mr A MacKintosh, seconded by Mrs T Robertson, to raise an objection because, taking into account the assessment of visual impacts contained within the report of handling, the proposed development does not respect the current pattern and extent of development within the area and has significant detrimental visual impact on views of users of the A887 and A87 and of recreational users of elevated land to the east, and therefore does not comply with NPF4 polices 4 and 11, and policy 67 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and the onshore wind energy supplementary guidance.</p> <p>Amendment: Mr T MacLennan, seconded by Mr K Gowans, to raise no objection as recommended in the report.</p> <p>For the motion: Mr D Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr A MacKintosh, Mr P Oldham, Mrs T Robertson (5)</p> <p>For the amendment: Mr K Gowans, Mr R Jones, Ms S Fanet, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr T MacLennan, Ms L Saggars (6)</p>	
	Agreed: to RAISE NO OBJECTION , as recommended in the report.	PW
6.2	<p>Applicant: Black Isle Brewing Co. Ltd (23/04074/FUL) (PLS/06/24) Location: Land West of Inverness Retail and Business Park, Highlander Way, Nature of Development: Erection of brewery and distillery, storage and distribution Recommendation: Grant</p> <p>Declaration of Interest: Mrs I MacKenzie, as an acquaintance of the applicant, declared an interest in this item and left the chamber for the duration of the item.</p>	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to conclusion of a Section 75 Agreement and the conditions recommended in the report, and with an additional condition seeking to ensure that bar and restaurant gross floor areas are not extended without planning permission being granted.	JM

6.3	<p>Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (23/03891/FUL) (PLS/07/24) Location: Land at Beauly East (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Erection of houses (amended layout to 20/03444/FUL and 20/03445/FUL reducing from 63 to 52 units). Recommendation: Grant</p> <p>During discussion, Members drew attention to the need to review policies relating to community development contributions, with particular reference to schools.</p>	
	<p>Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report.</p>	BR
6.4	<p>This application had been withdrawn by the applicant.</p> <p>Applicant: Ms Glynis Sinclair (23/01228/PIP) (PLS/08/24) Location: Land 40M South of Oakview Cottage, Cantray, Croy (Ward 17). Nature of Development: Erection of house. Recommendation: Refuse</p>	
		n/a
7	<p>Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division Co-dhùnadh mu Iartas do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir</p>	
7.1	<p>Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission plc (21/04728/FUL) Location: Land 1185M West Of Knotty Wood Cottage, Farr (Ward 12) Nature of Development: Construction of the tracks to access the Knocknagael-Tomatin 275kw Over Head Line (in retrospect)</p>	
	<p>NOTED the Reporter's decision to allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the decision notice.</p>	
7.2	<p>Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (21/04582/PIP) Location: Land 80 metres East of Balvonie Cottage, Inshes, Inverness, IV2 5JZ (Ward 19) Nature of Development: Residential development (up to 130 houses) with associated infrastructure.</p>	
	<p>NOTED the Reporter's decision, following conclusion of a s75 planning obligation securing both affordable housing and developer contributions, to allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the conditions listed in the decision notice.</p>	
7.3	<p>Applicant: Corriegarth 2 Windfarm Ltd Land (21/00101/S36) Location: Land at Carn Na Saobhaidhe, Gorthleck, Inverness (Ward 12) Nature of Development: Corriegarth 2 Wind Farm - Erection and Operation of a Wind Farm for a period of 30 years, comprising of 16 Wind Turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, access tracks, borrow pits, substation, control building, and ancillary infrastructure.</p>	
	<p>NOTED the decision of the Scottish Ministers to grant consent and deemed planning permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of an appropriate assessment and subject to conditions for the reasons indicated in the enclosed decision letter.</p>	

	The meeting ended at 4pm.	
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ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<p>Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan</p> <p>Apologies were intimated on behalf of Ms A MacLean and Ms M Smith.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3	<p>Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais</p> <p>There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the North Planning Applications Committee on 31 January 2024 which were APPROVED.</p>	
4	<p>Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra</p> <p>There had been circulated Report No PLN/001/23 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the "Major" development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination.</p> <p>Members were advised of the Council's intention to bring to the meeting of NPAC on 16 April 2024, planning application 23/00069/FUL-Broadford Substation. The Committee were advised that as this was a National Development, a pre-determination hearing may be required. Members agreed that if a pre-determination hearing was to be held, the meeting would begin at 10am.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.</p>	DJ
5	<p>Major Developments – Pre-application consultation Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais</p>	
5.1	<p>Description: The construction and operation of a 400kV substation, access, construction compound, landscaping and ancillary infrastructure. (24/00290/PAN) (PLN/020/24) Ward: 01 - North, West And Central Sutherland Applicant: SSE Site Address: Land 2430M SW Of Loch Buidhe, Bonar Bridge</p> <p>During discussion it was queried how much of the large site area would remain as forestry; and it was highlighted that there were large areas of peat on the site. Members were advised at this stage until a planning application was lodged detailing the full extent of the proposal it was not possible to comment further on these points. The red line would encompass what is proposed and would require to be accompanied with the relevant environmental information.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the application.</p>	MK
5.2	<p>Description: The construction and operation of a 400kV substation, HVDC converter, access, construction compound, landscaping and ancillary infrastructure. (24/00291/PAN) (PLN/021/24) Ward: 03 - Wick And East Caithness</p>	MK

	<p>Applicant: SSE Site Address: Land 360M NE Of Achalone Cottage, Halkirk</p> <p>During discussion the following main points were raised:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it would be hard for this application to not have an effect on visual amenity; • it was queried whether the HVDC converter would pose a fire risk; • the quality of the grazing land was queried; • information was sought about the loss of biodiversity; and • some concerns have already been noted in terms of fire risk from battery storage and the Leader of the Council had written to the Scottish Government about these concerns. <p>The Committee NOTED the application.</p>	
5.3	<p>Description: Glen Ullinish Coastal Delivery - Proposed new quay on the eastern shore of Loch Caroy, the Proposal will also be subject to a Marine Licence(s) for parts of the development below the mean high water spring tide level under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 (24/00292/PAN) (PLN/022/24) Ward: 10 - Eilean A' Cheò Applicant: Muirhall Energy Site Address: Land 460M South Of Seacliff House, Caroy, Struan, Skye</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the application.</p>	MH
6	<p>Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh</p>	
6.1	<p>Applicant: (22/01972/S36) (PLN/023/24) Armadale Wind Farm Ltd Location: Land 800M South Of Armadale Farm, Armadale (Ward 01) Nature of Development: Armadale Wind Farm - Erection and Operation of Wind Farm for a period of 30 years, comprising of 9 Wind Turbines with maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, access tracks, borrow pits, substation, control building, met mast, battery energy storage system and ancillary infrastructure. Recommendation: RAISE OBJECTION</p> <p>Members were advised that a late representation had been received and a copy had been circulated to all Members prior to the Committee. A copy of the representation would also be made available on the planning portal.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to RAISE AN OBJECTION for the reasons detailed in the report.</p>	MK
6.2	<p>Applicant: (23/00997/FUL) (PLN/024/24) Pat Munro (Alness) Ltd Location: Land 220M East of Obsdale Primary School, Milnafua, Alness (Ward 06) Nature of Development: Erection of 99 No dwellings, associated infrastructure and public open space Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGEED to GRANT planning permission subject to the conclusion of a section 75 agreement, the conditions detailed in the report and the following additional condition: relating to the layout, design and construction of the proposed play-area.</p>	MK
6.3	<p>Applicant: (23/02936/S36) (PLN/025/24) Creag Riabhach Wind Farm Limited Location: Creag Riabhach Wind Farm, Lairg, IV27 4AD (Ward 01) Nature of Development: Creag Riabhach Extension Wind Farm – erection</p>	RD

	<p>and operation of 3 turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, installation of Battery Energy Storage System, access tracks, and associated infrastructure</p> <p>Recommendation: RAISE NO OBJECTION</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to RAISE NO OBJECTION raise no objection to the proposal subject to the removal of Turbine 1 as it was considered to have a significant and detrimental impact on the wider landscape, in that T1's siting was considered to be set apart from T2 and T3, in an isolated manner and failed to coherently form part of the existing landscape and as such the magnitude of change was considered to be unacceptable. T1 was therefore considered contrary to the provisions of Policy 4 and policy 11 of NPF 4 and policies 57 and 61 of the HWLDP.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to grant officer's delegated powers to address further consultation responses from the Energy Consents Unit for the removal of Turbine 1</p>	
<p>6.4</p>	<p>Applicant: (23/00685/FUL) (PLN/026/24) Mr Ashley Cross Location: Land 105M NW Of Allwood, 9 Teangue (Ward 10) Nature of Development: Erection of house and 4no holiday pods, siting of 2no static caravans. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the substandard condition of the access road, and in particular the increased use of the access track by the addition of the 4 pods; ii. the proposal was considered contrary to the criteria of policy 36 of the HwLDP which requires development in the wider countryside to be adequately serviced in terms of road access; and iii. given the location of the 4 pods being sited further along the access track and the substandard condition of the road, the existing access track was not of a standard that could adequately serve the proposed development in light of its increased use by the 4 pods and this increased use would be significantly detrimental to road safety by those looking to access the 4 proposed pods. 	<p>MH</p>
<p>6.5</p>	<p>Applicant: (23/05507/FUL) (PLN/027/24) Mr James McColl Location: Land 150M South West Of Hillhead, John O'Groats (Ward 03) Nature of Development: Erection of dwelling and 4no. glamping pods (amendment to previous application 23/02968/FUL) Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>Prior to the presentation, attention was drawn to the following corrections to the report:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the consultee comments in section 4.1 were not from the Development Plans team as stated, but from the Tourism and Inward Investment team; and ii. the case had not been brought to the Committee due to a Community Council objection. While Dunnett and Canisbay Community Council had noted local opposition to the proposal they had not objected. <p>During discussion it was requested that a report on increasing visitor numbers in the John O'Groats area be taken to a meeting of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT planning permission subject to the</p>	<p>CS</p>

	conditions laid out in the report.	
7	Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division Co-dhùnadh mu Iarrtas do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir	
7.1	<p>Applicant: (23/01144/FUL) (PPA-270-2291) (PLN/0/)</p> <p>Location: Portree Hotel Somerled Square Portree IV51 9EH (Ward 10)</p> <p>Nature of Development: Retention of outdoor seating area (previous permission 20/02709/FUL)</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the Reporter's decision to dismiss the appeal and refuse planning permission for the reasons detailed in the Decision Notice.</p>	
	The meeting ended at 3.05pm	

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Wildfires Working Group** held in **Committee Room 1**, in **the Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness** on Friday 16 February 2024 at 2:30 pm.

Present:-

Mr M Baird

Ms S Fanet (Remote)

Mr R Jones

Mr S Kennedy

Mr P Logue

Ms K MacLean (Remote)

Other Members in attendance:-

Mr D McPherson

In attendance:-

Ms N Wallace, Service Lead, Environment, Development and Active Travel

Mr P Waite, Principal Planner, Environment, Development and Active Travel

Mr A Denovan, Resilience Officer, Corporate Communications

Mr J Taylor, Roads Operational Manager, Roads & Infrastructure, Infrastructure
Environment & Economy

Mr D MacKenzie, Communications and Engagement Officer

Mrs O Bayon, Committee Officer, Performance and Governance Service

Also in attendance:-

Mr R King, Station Commander (Highland Central) Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Mr R Jones in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr C Birt, Mr D Fraser, Ms T Robertson, and Mr R Stewart.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement

There were no declarations of interest/transparency statements.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated, and were **NOTED**, Minutes of Meeting of the Wildfires Working Group held on 5 October 2023.

4. Role of Corporate Communications and Resilience Team, and role of the Scottish Wildfire Forum

There had been circulated Report No WFWG/01/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

The Resilience Officer provided a presentation in amplification of the report regarding the Duties and Framework behind the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Local Resilience Partnership (LRP) Work Programme, Wildfire Lead Responders (WLR), Scottish Wildfire Forum (SWF) and Community Resilience Plans (CRP).

During discussion Members raised the following comments:-

- it was confirmed that Forestry and Land Scotland were part of the LRP and the SWF;
- it was explained that NHS Highland took lead for Care for People after the integration of local Health & Social Care Services in Highland in 2012 and this arrangement had worked very well;
- it was queried if the fire danger assessment warnings were deemed an effective system. It was confirmed that the Highlands fire danger system was based on the Canadian model, however it was highlighted that it was challenging for the general public to understand the warning notifications, and this would require further consideration at the SWF;
- the wildfire campaign from the FFRS would go live on 1 March 2024;
- in relation to the Community Asset Register (CAR), it was queried if it was live and easy for people to feed into it;
- attention was drawn to local companies and organisations who were able to offer assistance but were not on the CAR. In this regard it was queried how much engagement had taken place with community councils, and that it should be promoted to community councils via the Highland Council;
- only companies or organisations registered on the CAR were able to assist the SFRS firefighting operations;
- it was queried if the SFRS had drone operators. In this regard it was clarified that members of the public should not use a personal drone at the scene of a fire, but if they did so it was at their own risk;
- Members recommended that documentation and the application form for the CAR be as simple and efficient as possible to encourage more sign ups;
- information was sought and provided on how to speed up the process for establishing a CRP;
- it was confirmed that most CRPs included wildfires if a risk to the specific community existed;
- clarification was sought and provided regarding any potential legislation on the practice of muirburn. In this regard it was highlighted that muirburn was responsible for 50% of wildfires, and likely had an impact on biodiversity;
- as peat fires could continue to burn underground for up to one month, it was queried if this had been taken into consideration;
- it was queried if the SFRS would consider announcing a high fire risk time period and a low fire risk time period rather than a continuous warning

- during the summer months period. In this respect it was confirmed that the Council release social media notifications during high-risk time periods; and
- the roads department would take advice from Police Scotland to close roads in the event of a wildfire and put a temporary roads diversion in place, and local Rangers would close footpaths when required.

Thereafter, the Working Group:-

- NOTED** (a) the role of the Highland Council Corporate Communications and Resilience Team in relation to wildfire, (b) the role of the Scottish Wildfire Forum in co-ordinating wildfire prevention activities across Scotland, and (c) work undertaken by the Highland and Islands Local Resilience Partnership in respect of wildfire response;
- AGREED** to write to the Chairperson of the Scottish Wildfire Forum expressing any concerns and seeking reassurance on the progress of wildfire prevention measures; and
- AGREED** to take a paper to next Economy and Infrastructure Committee summarising progress/actions arising from the Working Group, thus concluding it's role.

5. Updates

An update was provided at the meeting regarding the following subjects:-

– Wildfire Prevention- Access Rangers

Members were advised that it was unlikely there would be an Access Ranger service in the 2024/25 summer period as the SG had indicated that it was unlikely that they would provide funding. In this regard, Members were informed that Sutherland area had ringfenced funds for 4 Rangers for the 2024/25 season, however this would need to be confirmed by the Chair of Sutherland County Committee.

– Educational Resources

During discussion it was confirmed that the Rangers had been approaching schools and holding sessions for teachers regarding the Scottish Outdoor Access Code which included wildfire prevention, and this had only limited take up by Lochness and some Sutherland schools thus far.

– Signs - Roadside & other

During discussion the following comments were raised:-

- Rangers had displayed magnetic signs on their vehicles during periods of high fire risk and displayed seasonal signs at sites that were of greater risk. However, during the 2024/25 season the ability to display these signs would be limited;

- other Services could display available signage on their fleet vehicles during the 2024/25 season, or information could be provided to them to produce their own signs at times of high fire risk;
- the cost of magnetic signage had been approximately £50 per sign to purchase;
- whilst there was no highland wide bylaw to stop the usage of disposable barbecues, it was confirmed that certain wholesalers banned the sale of disposable barbecues during the summer months in England and Scotland;
- suggestion was made to display signage at Council owned public conveniences, community noticeboards, temporary roadside black on yellow signage, and approach local fast-food vendors to also display signage;
- it was confirmed that the magnetic signage listed cigarettes as a fire risk;
- a forthcoming SFRS nationwide campaign would highlight the different causal factors for starting wildfires. In this regard Members welcomed that wildfire marketing prevention would start before people turned up for camping holidays to discourage the use of campfires or disposable barbecues. It was also confirmed that Visit Scotland were involved in a campaign to warn visitors about wildfire dangers, and it was hoped that this would be coordinated with the SFRS approach;
- Transport Scotland and BEAR Scotland planned to team up with SFRS to create nadex road signs to warn the public about wildfire dangers;
- it was suggested that short term let licences included a condition to have a wildfire information sheet included in the visitor information pack;
- it was hoped that local organisations such as Eden Court, BID, HLH, visit inverness were not displaying media illustrations of campfires as this would encourage their use; and
- it was highlighted that the Council had a film unit who may be able to discourage filmmakers from showing campfires in their films.

Thereafter, the Working Group **NOTED** the updates.

The meeting ended at 16:00 pm

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Monitoring Group** held in the Leader's Meeting Room, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 22 February 2024 at 1:30 pm.

Present:-

Mr K Gowans
Mr M Green
Mr S Kennedy

Mr D Louden
Mr G MacKenzie
Mrs T Robertson

In attendance:-

Mr M MacLeod, Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy
Mr A Maguire, Head of Development and Regeneration
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager
Mr D Chisholm, Tourism & Inward Investment Team Leader
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager

Also in attendance:-

Mr C MacPherson, Chief Executive, ICF Green Freeport

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs H Crawford, Mr P Logue, Ms P Munro and Ms M Nolan.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

3. Feedback on Outline Business Case

There had been circulated Report No ICF/1/24 detailing the critical actions which needed to be addressed before the Outline Business Case (OBC) could be approved.

Members were provided with a summary of the Critical Actions and indications were that the UK and Scottish Governments were satisfied with the responses. In fact, an opinion of its high quality had been expressed and that formal acceptance of the of the OBC was imminent. Meetings with the UK and Scottish Governments took place every two weeks and there was an indication that further feedback, particularly on the Substantive Actions, would be sought at the Final Business Case stage.

Members having congratulated officers concerned for the considerable progress made, the Group **NOTED** progress and next steps.

4. Feedback on Final Business Case

There had been circulated Report No ICF/2/24 providing an update on progress of the Final Business Case.

Members were provided with a GANT chart which was updated weekly with all actions on target and some ahead. Environmental consultants were currently being tendered for and it was hoped that the successful tender would be locally based. An OBC was also underway regarding the seed capital elements. The aim was to have the FBC in place to be submitted to the Highland Council at its meeting on 9 May 2024 or, if necessary, to hold a Special Council meeting later in the month. However, with a UK election looming, possibly in May, the Group were informed that as soon as an election was announced the process would stop.

Reference was made to a supply ship which had to wait two days before docking at Invergordon and, once the Freeport was up and running, similar delays needed to be avoided at all costs. There was a raft of reasons why this might have occurred, including that of customs. The Border Force were based in Aberdeen but it was important that they considered having an office located in Invergordon as well.

The Group otherwise **NOTED** the latest version of the work programme.

5. Ten Point Plan for Skills

There had been circulated Report No ICF/3/24 outlining a ten point plan for skills.

This plan had been developed over the last year to understand the challenges the Freeport would have in terms of workforce demands. It was important to attract workers back to Highland, to retain young people with job opportunities and to encourage oil and gas workers to transition. The plan covered most of what was needed and work was taking place with colleges, universities and Skills Development Scotland to ensure that they were able to provide the skills and training required. Some elements of the plan would undoubtedly change and evolve but it was important to be as ready as possible.

In discussion Members welcomed the long term high quality careers that would be created. A new restructured approach would need to be considered, including the possibility of condensing courses. In addition, there needed to be a focus on schools to ensure the necessary skills were already being taught but also to encourage young people into the industry. It was disappointing that the number of places supported by the Funding Council had reduced but it was important to emphasise to them that the Green Freeport needed to be treated as a special case.

The Group **NOTED** the skill plan.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

Mr Calum MacPherson, ICF Green Freeport, Chief Executive explained stakeholder engagement to date. This had included a community event, a presentation to the University of the Third Age and a Supplier Day. It was acknowledged that more community engagement was necessary, but the difficulty was, without approval of the OBC, it was difficult to promote something that was not yet in place. Discussions too would take place with Strategic Leaders, such as the Invergordon Port Authority and Local Members, recognising that early discussion solved a lot of issues. With the development of Placed Place Plans it would be important to manage expectations about the financial opportunities and what the benefits might be.

Discussions with HM Treasury was on-going and a report on the Tax Sites would be considered at the Group's next meeting.

The Group **NOTED** the stakeholder engagement.

The meeting ended at 2.10 pm.

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Harbours Management Board** held in **Committee Room 1 and 2**, in the **Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness** on Friday 23 February 2024 at 2:30 pm.

Present:-

Mr M Green (Chair)	Ms L Niven (Remote)
Mr H Morrison	Mr K Rosie (Remote)
Mr C Munro(Remote)	Mrs T Robertson

Non-members also present:

Mrs M Hutchison
Mr P Oldham (Remote)

In attendance:-

Ms T Urry, Head of Roads & Infrastructure
Mr D Seddon, Acting Harbours Manager, Community Services
Mr G Smith, Service Lead – Infrastructure (remotely)
Mr A MacIver, Principal Engineer, Project Design Unit
Mrs O Bayon, Committee Officer, Performance and Governance Service

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr I Brown, Ms J McEwan, and Mr R Stewart.

The Chair however expressed disappointment that formal apologies had not been submitted in advance and confirmed he would follow up with each absent Member individually regarding this matter. Members were reminded that formal apologies should be submitted as early as possible to ensure meetings were quorate.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement

The Committee **NOTED** the following Transparency Statement:-

Item 8: Mr M Green

3. Election of Vice Chair

Having been formally proposed and seconded, the Board **AGREED** to appoint Mr H Morrison as a Vice Chair.

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

There had been circulated, and were **NOTED**, minutes of Meeting of the Harbours Management Board held on the 3 November 2023.

5. Uig Harbour Redevelopment Update

There had been circulated Report No HMB/01/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

The Principal Engineer gave a presentation in support of the report regarding the Uig Harbour Redevelopment Scheme including the new terminal building, new vessels, second outage, electrical infrastructure for new vessels, construction progress and community engagement.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- thanks were expressed to officers for the report and for their hard work on the project;
- an update regarding progress on installing electric bus charging terminals was requested;
- it was queried how the Community Liaison Group interactions were progressing. In this regard, it was confirmed there was an upcoming meeting scheduled for 21 March 2024;
- feedback was requested regarding discussions in Uig, Tarbert and Lochmaddy;
- project costs and budget updates were requested for the next meeting;
- it was confirmed that the new waiting room would contain WCs and these would be connected to the mains water and have appropriate means of waste disposal. In this regard, Members confirmed that the arrangements for WC waste disposal should be a priority issue and requested an update for the next meeting;
- some project frustrations were out-with Council control such as inclement weather and the CalMac skipper rejecting the fixing at the round head;
- the local Uig community were pleased that lights would be turned off at night;
- it was queried who would own the new terminal building and if it would be leased to CalMac; and
- information was sought, and provided, on how hybrid diesel vessels functioned and operated on their two energy sources.

Thereafter the Board:-

- i. **NOTED** the position; and
- ii. **AGREED** to update the Board on the WC waste disposal specification at the next meeting.

6. Lease of the Dwarwick Pier and associated land to the Dwarwick Pier Association

There had been circulated Report No HMB/02/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- Members expressed their thanks for the hard work and efforts of the Dwarwick Pier Association and wished them well in their new endeavours;
- it was hoped that the Caithness Area Committee might be able to contribute to the project from the ward discretionary budget;
- clarification was sought if the lease would facilitate the grant funding, or vice versa; and
- it was confirmed that the Chair would write to the Dwarwick Pier Association in due course to confirm the Boards decision.

The Board **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** that the Environment and Infrastructure Committee approve:-

- i. the offer of a lease to the Dwarwick Pier Association for the pier and adjacent land as shown in Appendix 1 of the report;
- ii. that the matter be passed to the Estates and Legal Sections for the necessary lease documentation to be drawn up and concluded; and
- iii. the offer to transfer ownership of the facility to Association, should they request ownership.

7. Assignment of the Seabed Lease for Kintail Jetty

There had been circulated Report No HMB/03/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

Members were of the view that it was a sensible and wise course of action to support the recommendation.

The Board **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** that the Environment and Infrastructure Committee approve:-

- i. the assignment of the seabed lease as requested; and
- ii. Legal Services be so instructed to enable them to complete the necessary assignment documentation.

8. Nairn Harbour Cruise Liner Terminal

Transparency Statement: Mr M Green made a Transparency Statement in respect of this Item as he had previous involvement in the regeneration of the Nairn harbour and seafront project between 2012-17. However, having applied the objective test, reviewed his position in relation to the Item, he did not consider that he had an interest to declare.

There had been circulated Report No HMB/04/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- any increase in the Nairn Harbour capacity would increase traffic in the town. Therefore further pressure should be applied to the Scottish Government to prioritise the Nairn bypass road to alleviate traffic in the town before the Harbour project commenced;
- the wider project must also consider the access, roads, coach parking, security, and staff provisions. In this regard, it was confirmed that the project proposal would have to include consultation, and a full review of the economic impact; and
- it was confirmed that the project concept design work had been funded from the regeneration fund and had cost £6,5000.

The Board **NOTED** the concept design.

9. Additional urgent Item - Schedule of Rates and Dues for 2024/25

In terms of Standing Order 8, the Chair had agreed that the following be taken as an additional urgent item due to the need for the revised rates and dues to be in place for the 2024/25 financial year and to meet the service income target for this activity which has been set for 2024/25 financial year.

There had been circulated Report No HMB/05/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

During discussion, the following points were made:-

- it was felt that the increased Scheduled Rates figure of 5.5% was fair and equitable. In this regard it was confirmed that the Council required to cover costs and therefore this increase was welcomed; and
- Members wished to pass on their kind regards and best wishes to the Harbours Manager Mr Usher due to his recent absence. In this regard it was confirmed that Mr Seddon had been appointed as Acting Harbour Manager in Mr Usher's absence.

The Board:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the Scheduled of Rates and Dues, inclusive of the annual inflationary uplift applied at 5.5%; and
- ii. **AGREED** to recommend to the Environmental and Infrastructure Committee to approve the publication Schedules of Rates and Dues for Highland Council Harbours for the financial year 2024/25.

The meeting ended at 3.15 pm

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Community Regeneration Fund Strategic Sub Group** held **Remotely** on Thursday 27 March 2024 at 12 noon.

Present:-

Mr I Brown	Ms L Johnston
Mr J Finlayson	Mr R Jones
Mr R Gale	Ms L Kraft
Mr K Gowans	Mr G MacKenzie
Mr R Gunn	Ms K Willis

In attendance:-

Mr A McCann, Economy and Regeneration Manager
Ms F Hepburn, Project Manager
Ms P Betts, Project Officer
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager

1. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr M Green.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement

The Sub Group **NOTED** the following Declaration of Interest

Items 3 and 4.11 – Mr R Gale

3. Community Regeneration Fund Assessment of Application – CRF2292 Sutherland

Declaration of Interest – Mr R Gale made Declaration of Interest in this item as one of the developers of the project and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, left the meeting for this item.

There was circulated Report No HCCF/1/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure Environment & Economy.

It was explained that this project, the Sutherland Resilience Initiative, was being developed by Sutherland Members and, consequently, due to the number of Declarations of Interest at the Sutherland County Committee, it had not been possible to determine it at a local level. As a result, the application was now in front of the Strategic Group for determination with Members being informed that the 2022/23 Sutherland Community Regeneration Fund allocation had a remaining balance of £101,673. It was confirmed that the application was technically eligible and had been RAG'd as Amber in terms of match funding and robustness.

The Initiative's purpose was to develop an integrated transport strategy to address gaps in provision and to provide better transport services to address inequalities. The proposal had under gone various community consultations

and the funding would go towards the third phase which was to appoint a Planning Transport Manager with administrative support.

The Sub Committee **AGREED** to award the Sutherland Resilience Initiative £101,673 towards the Sutherland Transport project.

4. Community Regeneration Fund Assessment of Applications – UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Declaration of Interest – Mr R Gale made Declaration of Interest in application 4.11 as a Trustee of Go Golspie and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, left the meeting for that application.

There was circulated Report No HCCF/2/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Economy and Environment.

It was explained that there was £1,033,384 available from the UK Share Prosperity Fund, both capital and revenue. As all funding needed to be spent by 31 March 2025 early determination was being taken to ensure successful grant applicants would have as much time as possible to complete their project and claim their grant. 23 applications had been circulated including 2 Area Committee applications where there had been no funds available to fund them. However, 2 applications, namely the applications from the Raasay Development Trust and the Communities Housing Trust, were not eligible and had unconfirmed match funding respectively so could not now be considered. All of the remaining applications had consents in place and a RAG analysis provided.

In discussion Members sought confirmation on the detail of specific projects. Nevertheless, it was good to see monies going out to communities.

The Sub Group **AGREED** to make awards as detailed to the following projects:-

Projects	Applicant	Award
Glenfinnan out-of-hour visitor toilets	National Trust for Scotland	£36,000
Staffin Harbour Water Supply & Safety Equipment	Staffin Community Trust	£27,294.22
Improving Energy Efficiency at the Highlands Main Cultural Centre	Eden Court Highlands	£58,500
Places and People	Broadford and Strath Community Company	£42,370
Delivering top priorities in the Lochalsh Community Action Plan	Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust	£24,961
Community and Conservation at RSPB Corrimony Nature Reserve	RSPB Scotland	£57,938.70

Nairn Community Transport	Purchase of New Minibus	£44,500
Support for Community Planning across Sutherland through employment and management of Support officer by KoSDT	Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust (KoSDT) on behalf of the Sutherland Community Partnership	£40,088
Culbokie Village Hub – Toilets and Potting Shed Phase	Culbokie Community Trust	£100,000
The Burnside Park Project	Aviemore Community Enterprise Company Ltd	£80,823.02
Continuing and developing Go Golspie Community Transport	Go Golspie Development trust	£58,783
Young Carers Build Project	Skye and Lochalsh Community Care Forum	£37,548
Glenurquhart Centre Facility Upgrade	Glenurquhart Care Project	£30,202
Nairn Area Local Place Plan phase 2	NICE Nairn Improvement Community Enterprise	£35,000
EV Charging in Poolewe	Highland Council	£70,827.15
CISP 2024	North Highland Initiative	£50,000
Creating support mechanisms and friendships within the community	Nairn Bowling Club	£25,965
Feasibility Study for future of Inverness Sea Cadets Buildings	Inverness Sea Cadets Unit	£5,268
Knocknagael Green Hub	Knocknagael Ltd	£68,791.91
Dunvegan Community Park	Dunvegan Community Trust SCIO	£40,000
Connecting Communities	The Garve & District Development Company	£98,494
Total		£1,033,354

The meeting ended at 12.25 pm.