

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee** held in **The Courthouse, 36 High Street, Kingussie / Remotely** on 10 February 2025 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Mr J Bruce
Ms M Cockburn

Mr R Jones (**in the Chair**)
Mr B Lobban

In attendance:

Ms A Jansson, Chief Officer, Education (Primary)
Mr S Grant, Senior Engineer

Also in attendance: Inspector R McCartney. Police Scotland

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

There were none.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt/ Aithris Fhollaiseachd

There were none.

At the request of the Chair, due to the late arrival of the Police representative, Item 4 was considered before Item 3.

4. Area Roads Capital Programme 2025-26 Prògram Calpa Rathaidean Sgìreil 2025-26

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/02/25 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- attention was drawn to specific roads that required attention and would be dealt with outwith the meeting;
- assurance was sought that wherever possible external funding contribution to roads repair and maintenance was sought, and disappointment expressed that the Scottish Government Strategic Timber Fund was coming to an end; and
- it was requested that timber lorries using the bridge on the B970 road be reminded not to cross it in convoy.

The Committee **APPROVED** the proposed 2025-26 Area Roads Capital Programme for Badenoch and Strathspey.

3. Police Area Performance Report Poileas – Geàrr-chunntas air Coileanadh Sgìreil

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/01/25 by the Area Commander (South Highland Area Command), Police Scotland.
Second

During discussion, the following issues were considered:-

- the layout and clarity of the report was welcomed;
- information was sought and provided on the following topics:
 - whether drink and drug offences were counted separately, despite being reported together;
 - assurance that equitable support was being provided in Badenoch and Strathspey for the range of sexual offences being recorded;
- Members expressed discontent at the national policy not to enforce the 20mph speed limit zones in town and village centres and asked that their concern be passed on within Police Scotland; and
- Police attendance at Community Council meetings varied considerably and it was suggested that if an officer was unable to attend, given staffing pressures, a brief note of area activity be provided to Community Councils, or a separate brief, informal meeting take place with the Chair. Efforts to ensure Police liaison officer contact details were up to date were summarised.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2023–2026 Year 1 attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 01 April 2024 – 31 December 2024; and
- ii. the change in format necessitate by a reduction in back-office capacity to prepare additional area committee reports

4. Education Associated School Group Report Aithisg Foghlaim Buidheann Sgoiltean Co-cheangailte

During discussion of both reports, 5a and 5b, the following issues were raised:

- with reference to the reducing roll at both schools, and the poor state of repair of the school buildings, a ten year plan was suggested, with a view to the replacement of both schools with one new building. Information on the school estate and on the number of placement requests being processed between the two schools was requested, and it was pointed out that other social and economic issues required consideration in relation to any building rationalisation; and
- information was sought and provided on the reducing numbers of exclusions and alternative practices.

a. Grantown Grammar Associated School Group

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/03/25 by the Executive Chief Officer - Education and Learning.

b. Kingussie High Associated School Group

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/04/25 by the Executive Chief Officer - Education and Learning.

The Committee **NOTED** the reports and **AGREED** information on the area's school estate, and on the numbers of placement requests between the two schools, be provided to Members.

5. Grantown on Spey Common Good Fund – Revenue Reserves Update and 2025/26 Proposed Budget **Maoin Math Coitcheann Bhaile nan Granndach**

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/05/25 by the Assistant Chief Executive Place and Chief Officer – Corporate Finance.

During discussion, Members made reference to the Common Good Fund being for the benefit of the residents of Grantown on Spey, and that it was not permitted to be used for any activity which the Council had a statutory duty to provide. Examples of its possible use included local charities, community events and community projects. It was important the Common Good Fund be given time to produce an income stream which would be used for funding.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the forecast 2024/25 year end position of the Grantown on Spey Common Good Fund revenue reserves of £910 as set out in the report; and
- ii. **APPROVED** the proposed budget for 2025/26 as set out in **Appendix 1**.

6. Ward Discretionary Budget **Buidseat fo Ùghdarras Uàird**

The Committee **NOTED** the following Ward Discretionary Fund application that had been approved since the last Committee:-

- Newtonmore Community Woodland & Development Trust NCWDT: Wildflower Panels, Wildcat Trail - £1,500

The remaining available Ward Discretionary Fund balance was £7,610.

7. Minutes **Geàrr-chunntas**

The Committee **NOTED** minutes of the meeting of the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee held on 25 November 2024, which had been approved by the Council on 12 December 2024.

The meeting ended at 10.15am.