

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Redesign Board of the Highland Council** held in Committee Rooms 1 & 2, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on 20 March 2025 at 2pm.

Members present:

Mr M Baird
Mr B Boyd (remote)
Mr R Bremner
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair (remote)
Mr A Christie (remote)
Mrs M Cockburn
Mr M Green
Mrs J Hendry

Ms B Jarvie (remote)
Mr R Jones
Mr B Lobban
Mr A MacKintosh
Mr D Macpherson
Mrs T Robertson
Mr J Gibson, UNISON
Mrs C A Stewart, GMB

Non-Members present:

Mr C Ballance
Dr C Birt (remote)
Mr J Bruce
Mr R Gale

Mr A Graham (remote)
Mr R MacKintosh
Mrs A MacLean (remote)
Ms K MacLean

Participating Officials:

Mr A Gunn, Assistant Chief Executive, Corporate
Ms A Clark, Chief Officer, Housing and Communities
Mrs S Armstrong, Chief Officer - Revenues and Commercialisation
Mr J Shepherd, Chief Officer, Business Solutions
Ms T Urry, Head of Roads & Infrastructure
Mr E Gilbert, Project Manager (Strategic Improvement)
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Leisgeulan

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Mr D Fraser, Mr G MacKenzie, Ms L Saggars, and Ms M Smith.

2. Declarations of Interest

Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

There were none.

3. Minutes

Geàrr-chunntas

The Board **NOTED** the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2024, which had been approved by the Council on 12 December 2024.

4. Redesign of Highland Council – Work Programme Update **Ath-dhealbhadh Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd – Cunntas às Ùr mun** **Phrògram Obrach**

There had been circulated Report No RDB/01/25 by the Chief Officer – Business Solutions.

Following a summary of the various programmes, the following issues were raised during discussion:

- in relation to the new website, assurance was sought that out of date information and pages would not be transferred. Services had been tasked with reviewing their web pages and a summary was provided of the processes being undertaken, with immediate priority being given to the most well-used pages. The reputational risk of transferring incorrect information was highlighted, as was the need for tight cyber security. A timeline for the transfer to the new site was requested and assurance was provided that there would be in-house capacity and ability to continuously update the new site
- clarity was sought on the contact details that would be available on the new site, and information was provided about the current and future process for the public to report, pay or request information and services. Support and contact details for members was different and assurance was provided that there would be Member training in April on how to access contact information, and on the current reporting tool;
- clarity was sought and provided on the funding situation for Project 3, MyHighland, with the need for further funding being currently uncertain; and
- the Convenor asked that the Board be kept update on progress with Asset Rationalisation and he referred to a number of other projects which had originated with the Redesign Board, which he would follow up with officers outwith the meeting.

The Board **NOTED** the work programme update and **AGREED** the Board be updated on progress with Asset Rationalisation.

5. Roads Redesign Phase 1 Closure Report **Aithisg Dùnaidh Ìre 1 Ath-dhealbhachadh Rathaiden**

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

Following a presentation by the Head of Roads & Infrastructure, Members raised the following issues during discussion:

- the closure of Phase 1 was welcomed and, although it had taken a significant amount of time, attention was drawn to the amount of work that had been required over the previous three years. It was hoped the pace would be increased for the next phase;
- several areas of improvement were detailed, including new pothole filling technology, improved efficiency and use of resources, improved feedback to the public on issues reported, and a move to more pro-active planned maintenance;
- in relation to planning road maintenance and repairs, there was a need to balance flexibility versus complying with audited processes;

- in relation to the live mapping of potholes, it was queried whether this might lead to an increase in damages claims. Assurance was provided that robust policies had been put in place;
- it was clarified that bridges were considered part of the road network infrastructure;
- attention was drawn to the reported use of AI by some local authorities in England to predict where future potholes might occur;
- information was sought and provided on progress with the Road Marking team:
- it was queried when a computerised rather than paper-based manual job card system would be implemented and, in response, it was hoped some progress would be made with this in the coming 12 months; and
- information was sought and provided on how contractors would be used and how to balance the need to prioritise individual potholes versus the efficiencies gained by tackling several in the same vicinity. This issue was being considered by the Working Group.

The Board **NOTED** the Road Improvement Project – Phase 1 Closure Report.

The meeting ended at 2.45pm.