

**The Highland Council
No. 8 2025/26**

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Highland Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday, 18 September 2025 at 9.30 am.

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

Present:

Ms S Atkin
Mr M Baird
Mr C Ballance
Mr A Baxter
Dr C Birt
Mr B Boyd
Mr R Bremner
Mr I Brown
Mr J Bruce
Mr M Cameron
Mrs I Campbell
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair
Mr A Christie
Mrs M Cockburn
Mr S Coghill
Ms T Collier
Ms H Crawford
Mr R Cross
Ms L Dundas
Mr J Edmondson
Ms S Fanet
Mr J Finlayson
Mr D Fraser
Mr L Fraser
Mr R Gale
Ms C Gillies
Mr K Gowans
Mr A Graham
Mr M Green
Mr D Gregg
Dr M Gregson

Mr R Gunn
Mrs J Hendry
Ms M Hutchison
Mrs B Jarvie (Remote)
Ms L Johnston
Mr S Kennedy
Ms E Knox
Ms L Kraft
Mr B Lobban
Mr P Logue (Remote)
Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr A MacKintosh
Mr R MacKintosh
Mrs A MacLean
Ms K MacLean
Mr T MacLennan (Remote)
Mr D Macpherson
Mr D McDonald
Mr J McGillivray (Remote)
Mr D Millar (Remote)
Mr H Morrison (Remote)
Ms L Niven (Remote)
Mr P Oldham
Mrs M Reid (Remote)
Mr M Reiss
Mrs T Robertson
Mr K Rosie (Remote)
Ms M Ross
Mrs L Saggars
Mr R Stewart
Ms K Willis

In Attendance:

Chief Executive
Assistant Chief Executive - Corporate
Assistant Chief Executive - People
Assistant Chief Executive – Place
Chief Officer – Legal and Corporate Governance
Chief Officer – Housing and Communities
Joint Democratic Services Manager

Mr B Lobban in the Chair

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr J Grafton, Mr A Jarvie, Mr R Jones, Ms M MacCallum, Mr W Mackay, Mr G MacKenize, Mr S Mackie, Mrs J McEwan, Mrs M Paterson and Mr A Sinclair.

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

The Council **NOTED** that there were no declarations of interest.

3. Review of the Highland Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils 2024/25 Ath-sgrùdadh de Sgeama Stèidheachaidh na Gàidhealtachd airson Chomhairlean Coimhearsnachd 2024/25

There had been circulated Report No. HC/23/25 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- after a previous motion at Council, Members had been made aware of several instances of Community Councils having difficulties surrounding the Code of Conduct;
- disappointment was expressed that only 10 comments had been received during consultation, and it was queried why 8 out of 10 comments were not within the legislative framework. It was clarified that there had been greater engagement during the first phase of consultation and that those comments that were not within the legislative framework concerned sanctions;
- information was sought, and provided, on the legal difficulties regarding sanctions;
- the plans for training for Community Councils were welcomed and it was queried whether Community Council Members could sign up to a Code of Conduct as their role was very important currently, especially in respect of Planning;
- the plan to write to the Scottish Government concerning sanctions was welcomed;
- there appeared to be some inequity as Community Councils had their constitutions chosen for them, but they did not get support from the Council when needed;
- it was important for the Council to communicate well with Community Councils and to look at the financing of Community Councils as they often felt that they were being asked to do more with less;
- it was highlighted that there had been problems with Thurso Community Council which had fallen into abeyance twice due to unresolved Code of Conduct issues. Guidance was needed on the Code of Conduct and what to do when a Community Council fell into abeyance;
- the work done by Community Councillors was commended; and
- in response to a question, it was clarified that although the Council had, in the past, organised public liability insurance for Community Councils, a change in legislation made them unable to continue to do so and the grant received by Community Councils had been increased to reflect this.

Decision

The Council:-

- i. **NOTED** the feedback received during the phase 2 consultation as part of the review of the Community Council Scheme; and
- ii. unanimously **AGREED** a new Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils in Highland which was set out at appendix 2 of the report.

The meeting ended at 9.50 am.