

## **The Highland Council**

Minutes of Meeting of the **Dingwall and Seaforth Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Dingwall on Monday, 9 February 2026 at 10.30am.

### **Present:**

Mr S Kennedy  
Mrs A MacLean

Mrs M Paterson

### **In attendance:**

Ms L Bauermeister, Community Development Manager  
Ms A Jansson, Area Quality Improvement Manager  
Mr I Moncrieff, Roads Operations Manager  
Ms C Murray, Project Officer, Community Regeneration  
Mr G Ralph, Repairs Manager, Housing  
Mrs G MacPherson, Committee Officer

### **Also in attendance:**

Mr D McAlpine, 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.**

### **Mrs M Paterson in the Chair**

#### **1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr G MacKenzie.

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

There were no Declarations of Interests/Transparency Statements.

#### **3. Police – Area Performance Summary Poilis – Geàrr-chunntas Dèanadais Sgìreil**

There had been circulated Report No DSA/1/26 by the North Area Commander.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- in response to concerns regarding county lines, violence, and anti-social behaviour, it was explained that intelligence from the public played a crucial role and that each piece of information helped to build a clearer picture. Gathering intelligence took time and not every single report could be acted on immediately. However, there was concern for

vulnerable residents who were asked to report incidents of anti-social behaviour despite being afraid to leave their homes;

- an explanation was sought, and provided, regarding reports that some incidents had not received a response;
- it was suggested that some members of the public had stopped reporting crimes because they felt they would not be investigated, and that the connection they once had with the Police had been lost;
- proactive community policing would be welcomed and it was asked what resources were available; and
- there were still concerns regarding the B9163 and B9169 junctions with the A835 road between Tore and Maryburgh, and it was asked what impact the Police had in this regard. In response, and in terms of accident hotspots, it was said that road traffic patrol plans were based on previous years' statistics.

The Committee **NOTED** the progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2023-2026 Year 1, attached as Annex A to this report, for the period covering 1 April 2025 – 31 December 2025.

#### **4. Area Roads Capital Programme 2026/27 Prògram Calpa Rathaidean Sgìreil 2026/27**

There had been circulated Report No DSA/2/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

Frustration was expressed due to the lack of funding available and it was felt that the Ward deserved more. There were a number of roads in need of resurfacing works, particularly those listed in Appendix 2 of the report. Prioritising between economic and community benefit was becoming increasingly more difficult to balance.

The Committee sought further information which included the amount of capital budget available for pavement improvements and whether the Housing Service were in a position to carry out improvements to car parking in Millbank Road and Chestnut Road in Dingwall. An update would be provided outside of the meeting.

It was commented that the recent works carried out by Openreach, which had resulted in lights and internet being cut off throughout a number of homes and streets, had caused chaos and upheaval.

The Committee:-

- APPROVED** the rolling programme of Capital schemes as listed in Appendix 2 of the report, which would be a multi-year programme;
- NOTED** that the Area budget would be available after the February 2026 Economy and Infrastructure Committee; and
- NOTED** that the rolling programme might require to be updated once results from the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey had been received and considered.

## **5. Housing Repairs Performance Report Aithisg Choileanaidh Càraidhean Taigheadais**

There had been circulated Report No DSA/3/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- in terms of the completion of repairs, it had been reported that staff who had attended tenants' homes had been professional and helpful;
- information was sought, and provided, as to why some void properties were empty for so long, and what impact this had on in-house repairs in terms of workload and cost;
- further information was sought, and provided, in terms of the ECO4 funding review. Where energy efficiency measures such as cavity wall insulation had been fitted, residents had reported a reduction in their energy bills; and
- in terms of section 8.5 of the report, Members had not yet been approached regarding local environmental projects and they looked forward to walking around the Ward. Clarification was sought, and provided, in terms of the budget available for these projects, some of which had already been ringfenced for vital upgrades.

The Committee **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2025 – 31 December 2025.

## **6. Housing Revenue Account Garage Rents 2026/27 Gharaidsean Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Taigheadais 2026/27**

There had been circulated Report No DSA/4/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

Members expressed concerns about increasing garage rents when there continued to be a number of garages that were unused, lying empty or in poor condition, and it appeared that little or no maintenance had been carried out for many years. While the recommended rent increase was intended to allow investment into garage improvements, housing repairs were prioritised and this could limit resources. It was felt that a walk around with local maintenance officers might be helpful.

Clarification was sought on the following:-

- how much of the Ward's garage rent income was reinvested into maintenance;
- what works had been carried out on garages in the Ward to date;
- how many garages were currently used for storage versus car parking;
- how many required repair and whether there was a maintenance programme; and
- details of the void garages, including how long they had been empty.

The Committee felt that the proposed 8-10% increase in garage rents was too high and sought an action plan in terms of garage repairs be submitted to a future Ward Business Meeting in order for the recommended increase to be considered in future.

The Committee **AGREED** a 5% rent increase to apply to Dingwall and Seaforth Garages and Garage Sites.

#### **7. Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) Award Duais Maoineachaidh Ath-bheothachadh Coimhearsnachd**

There had been circulated Report No DSA/5/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

Following a brief discussion on the specific projects, the Committee:-

- i. considered and **AGREED** to approve the applications;
- ii. **AGREED** that funding be awarded from the CRF as follows:
  - Dingwall Mountain Bike Trail Group - £6,715.50
  - Muir of Ord Development Trust - £13,325.79; and
- iii. **AGREED** to ringfence the remaining £34,140.60 Place Based Investment Programme funding for The Maryburgh Community Woodlands Group and The Peffery Way Association.

#### **8. Dingwall Common Good Fund Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Pheofharain**

There had been circulated Report No DSA/6/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** the Dingwall Common Good Fund (DCGF) Statement of Accounts for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- ii. **NOTED** the position of the DCGF as shown in the 2025/26 Q3 monitoring statement as set out in Appendix 2;
- iii. **APPROVED** the proposed budget for 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 3; and
- iv. **AGREED** to delegate to the Community Support and Engagement Team power to approve expenditure up to £10,000 in relation to DCGF within the annually set budget and following consultation with relevant Ward Members. This delegated power would be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process.

#### **9. Dingwall and Seaforth Area Place Plan – Progress Update Plana Àite Sgìre Inbhir Pheofharain agus Shìophort – Cunntas air Adhartas**

There had been circulated Report No DSA/7/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

Assurance was sought, and provided, as it was highlighted that some

communities, particularly those outside Dingwall, might feel overlooked though they had equal opportunity to contribute to the Delivery Group. Any additional groups that wished to participate in the Delivery Group were invited to contact the Community Development Manager.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the annual report which recognised the progress made by the Dingwall and Seaforth Area Place Plan Delivery Group and the opportunity the group afforded to review and refresh priorities on an ongoing basis; and
- ii. **AGREED** to support the targeting of service programmes and external funding to meet the Area Place Plan priorities when appropriate.

**10. Dingwall Academy Associated School Group Overview  
Foir-shealladh Buileachaidh Buidheann Sgoiltean Co-cheangailte Inbhir Pheofharain**

There had been circulated Report No DSA/8/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – People.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- the report showed that Ward 8 schools were doing well and this came down to the dedication of staff and leadership;
- information relating to St Clements School could be provided at a future Ward Business Meeting;
- it was asked what impact there had been on smaller schools where Head Teachers had to cover long term sickness. It was confirmed that the Head Teachers were supported and capacity was backfilled;
- information was sought, and provided, regarding the reasons for non-attendance and what was being done to encourage attendance;
- the number of home-schooled children was sought and would be provided outside of the meeting; and
- clarification was sought, and provided, in terms of the virtual comparator, which was said to be a guide.

The Committee **NOTED** the content of the report.

**11. Dingwall and Seaforth Ward Discretionary budget applications approved since last meeting  
Iarrtasan buidseat fo Ùghdarras Uàrd Inbhir Pheofharain agus Shìophort air an aontachadh bho choinneamh mu dheireadh**

The Committee **NOTED** the following Dingwall and Seaforth Ward Discretionary Budget applications approved between 15 November 2025 and 16 January 2026.

- i. Lady Haig's Poppy Factory - 5 poppy wreaths for Armistice Day - £151
- ii. Conon Bridge Lunch Club - Christmas Lunch 2025 - £300
- iii. Maryburgh Amenities Company - Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch 2025 - £400

- iv. Conon Bridge Community Council - Christmas Lunch 2025 - £500
- v. Muir of Ord Community Council - Senior Christmas Party - £500

## **12. Minutes**

### **Geàrr-chunntas**

The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes of Meeting of the Dingwall and Seaforth Area Committee held on 27 November 2025 which were approved by the Council on 11 December 2025.

The meeting ended at 12.55pm.