The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Educational Trust Fund Sub-Committee** held remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Monday 14 September 2026 at 10.00 am.

Present:
Mrs M Cockburn
Ms L Dundas
Mr D Millar (Chair)

In attendance:
Mr D Martin, Strategic Lead - Operations
Ms M Murray, Principal Committee Officer

Mr D Millar in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs I Campbell, Mr R Cross, Mr J Finlayson, Mr R Gale, Ms M Hutchison and Ms C Ramsay.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements

There were no Declarations of Interest or Transparency Statements.

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 16 March 2026

The Minutes of the Educational Trust Fund Sub-Committee held on 16 March 2026 were **APPROVED**.

4. Exclusion of the Public

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public should be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 4, 6 and 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

5. Caithness Educational Trust

There had been circulated Report No ETF/9/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – People.

The Sub-Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the financial position of the trust fund;
ii. **NOTED** the awards approved under delegated authority as detailed in section 6 of the report; and
iii. **AGREED** the recommendations set out in section 7 of the report.

6. Duncraig Educational Trust

There had been circulated Report No ETF/10/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – People.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that cognisance was taken of poverty and financial hardship when assessing applications and making recommendations for awards.

The Sub-Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the financial position of the trust fund; and
ii. **AGREED** the recommendations set out in section 7 of the report, subject to the bursary award in respect of application ETF/B/376/26 being issued only on receipt of a satisfactory progress report from the applicant, failing which the funding would be carried forward.

7. Inverness Royal Academy Endowment Trust

There had been circulated Report No ETF/11/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – People.

The Sub-Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the financial position of the trust fund; and
ii. **AGREED** the recommendations set out in section 6 of the report.

8. Inverness-shire Educational Trust

There had been circulated Report No ETF/12/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – People.

The Sub-Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the financial position of the trust fund; and
ii. **AGREED** the recommendations set out in section 6 of the report.

9. Ross and Cromarty Educational Trust

There had been circulated Report No ETF/13/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – People.

Clarification having been sought, and provided, on a number of points relating to the applications, the Sub-Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the financial position of the trust fund;
ii. **NOTED** the award approved under delegated authority as detailed in section 6 of the report; and
iii. **AGREED** the recommendations set out in section 7 of the report.

10. Sutherland Educational Trust

There had been circulated Report No ETF/14/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – People.

The Sub-Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the financial position of the trust; and
ii. **AGREED** the recommendations set out in section 6 of the report.

11. Monitoring Report: Gairloch and Plockton Educational Trust and John Kirk Mortification

There had been circulated Report No ETF/15/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – People.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- in response to a question, it was confirmed that the Educational Trust Funds were promoted through the Council's website and that flyers were distributed to libraries, schools and other buildings. It was suggested that schools be reminded, in advance of the next funding round, to consider whether there were any potential applicants who might benefit from grant funding;
- it having been queried whether non-vocational courses could be supported by the Trust Funds, it was explained that this depended on the terms of each individual Trust Scheme. It was emphasised that, whilst it was possible to review and update the Trust Schemes, this must be undertaken within the law, and the intentions of the original bequestor must be adhered to as far as possible. The Strategic Lead – Operations undertook to provide a link to enable Members to view the details of each Trust Scheme;
- in response to a question, it was explained that the sums of money specified in the Trust Schemes were fixed and could not be amended to reflect inflation without a review of the relevant Trust Scheme. The Strategic Lead – Operations suggested that it would be prudent to review the Trust Schemes every 10 years going forward, and Members concurred;
- appreciation was expressed to the Strategic Lead – Operations for his efforts in relation to the administration of the Educational Trust Funds; and
- on the point being raised, the Principal Committee Officer undertook to confirm a date for the March 2027 meeting of the Sub-Committee as soon as possible.

The Sub-Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the financial position of the Gairloch and Plockton Educational Trust;
ii. **NOTED** the financial position of the John Kirk Mortification;
iii. **NOTED** the actions underway to bring the administration of the John Kirk Mortification to its conclusion; and
iv. **AGREED** that the Council's Educational Trust Schemes be reviewed every 10 years going forward.

The meeting concluded at 10.50 am.