

**The Highland Council
No. 4 2015/2016**

Minutes of Meeting of the Highland Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday, 25 June 2015 at 10.35 am.

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

Present:

Dr D Alston	Mrs L MacDonald
Mr R Balfour	Mr N MacDonald
Mrs J Barclay	Mrs D Mackay
Mr A Baxter	Mr D Mackay
Mr D Bremner	Mr W MacKay
Mr I Brown	Mr G MacKenzie
Mrs C Caddick	Mr A Mackinnon
Mrs I Campbell	Ms A MacLean
Miss J Campbell	Mr T MacLennan
Mrs H Carmichael	Mr K MacLeod
Mr A Christie	Mrs B McAllister
Mr B Clark	Mrs I McCallum
Dr I Cockburn	Mr J McGillivray
Mrs G Coghill	Mr D Millar
Mr J Crawford	Mr H Morrison
Mrs M Davidson	Ms L Munro
Mr A Duffy	Mr B Murphy
Ms J Douglas	Mr F Parr
Mr D Fallows	Mr G Phillips
Mr G Farlow	Mr T Prag
Mr B Fernie	Mr M Rattray
Mr M Finlayson	Mr M Reiss
Mr C Fraser	Mr A Rhind
Mr L Fraser	Mr G Rimell
Mr H Fraser	Mrs F Robertson
Mr S Fuller	Mr J Rosie
Mr J Gordon	Ms G Ross
Mr B Gormley	Mr G Ross
Mr K Gowans	Mr R Saxon
Mr A Graham	Dr A Sinclair
Mr J Gray	Mrs G Sinclair
Mr M Green	Mrs J Slater
Mr R Greene	Ms M Smith
Mr A Henderson	Ms K Stephen
Mr D Hendry	Mr J Stone
Mr D Kerr	Mr B Thompson
Mr R Laird	Mrs C Wilson
Mr B Lobban	Mr H Wood

In Attendance:

Chief Executive	Director of Care and Learning
Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development	Director of Finance
Director of Development & Infrastructure	Director of Community Services

Mrs I McCallum in the Chair

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr N Donald, Mr J Ford, Mrs M Paterson and Mr I Renwick.

Preliminaries

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, the Convener, on behalf of the Council, welcomed Mr Drew Hendry to the meeting and congratulated him on his election to represent Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey in the UK Parliamentary Election. In this regard, she confirmed that she looked forward to working with him on issues which could benefit the Highland area.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

The Council **NOTED** the following declarations of interest:

Item 4 – Ms J Douglas, Mr M Green and Mr D Millar (all non-financial)

Item 12 – Dr D Alston, Mr G Ross, Mr H Wood, Mr R Saxon, Mr J Stone, Mr B Lobban and Mr D Fallows (all non-financial) and Mr I Brown (financial)

Item 14 – Ms G Ross (financial)

Item 17 - Mrs L MacDonald (financial)

Ms M Smith declared a non-financial interest in any items which led to discussion of Albyn Housing Association on the grounds of being a Board Member and Company Secretary.

3. Queen's Birthday Honours List Liosta Urraman Co-là-breith na Banrigh

It was confirmed that a number of people from the Highland area had received honours in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for 2015 and in this regard a list of the recipients had been circulated for information.

Decision

The Council **NOTED** the position and conveyed congratulations to all those who had received honours.

4. Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme – Gold Award Presentation Sgeama Duais Diùc Dhùn Èideann – Toirt Seachad Duais Òir

Declarations of Interest -

Ms J Douglas declared a non-financial interest in this item on the grounds of being a Director of High Life Highland, a Duke of Edinburgh Award Leader and sitting on the Highland Awards Project but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interests did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion.

Mr M Green and Mr D Millar declared non-financial interests in this item on the grounds of sitting on the Highland Awards Project but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion.

The Council was advised that, as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, 27 young people from across the Highlands were due to receive their Gold Award in the current year. In this regard, and following a summary of their achievements, the Convener presented Gold Award badges to the following eleven recipients who were present at the meeting:-

Zara Kelly, Ellena Leslie, Sarah Cleland, Caitlin Reid, Jennifer Scott, Jessamy Cowie, Shannah Grant, Scarlet Dewick, Mithran Macaden, Isobel Murray-John and Siobhan Vickerstaff.

The Convener also presented an award to Mr Jim Anderson in recognition of his 22 years of volunteering.

Decision

Having congratulated all of the recipients, the Council otherwise **NOTED** the position.

5. Membership of the Council/Senior Member posts Ballrachd na Comhairle/Prìomh Dhreuchdan Bhall

(i) Membership of the Council/Committees, etc

It was **NOTED** that the current membership of the Council was as follows -

Independent – 32 /SNP – 21 /Liberal Democrat – 11 /Labour – 8
Highland Alliance - 5/ Non Aligned - 3

The formula for places on Committees remained as 9/6/3/2/2.

In this regard, the Council **APPROVED** revised Committee Membership lists which had been tabled at the meeting.

The Council also **AGREED** the following change to membership of the South Planning Applications Committee – Mr L Fraser to fill the vacant place for a Substantive Member (with Mr S Fuller as the Substitute Member).

The Council further **AGREED** the following revisions to memberships in view of the dates of forthcoming meetings –

Highland Culture Strategic Board - Depute Leader of the Council, Chair of the Education, Children & Adult Services Committee and Mr K Gowans – on the basis that the new Chair of the Board would be appointed at the next meeting.

North Sea Commission - Mr R Greene

(ii) Senior Member posts

At this point in the meeting, it was confirmed that it was intended to remunerate Vice Chairs of Strategic Committees in recognition of workloads and also to combine the role of Children's Champion with that of Vice Chair of the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee.

It was also intended to consider revisions to Area Committees (and their associated workloads) and in relation to the role of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee (including remuneration).

In this respect, there had been tabled revised Remuneration List from the Director of Finance which was **APPROVED**.

Thereafter, the Council **AGREED** the following nominations for Senior Member posts:-

Depute Leader of the Council – **Mr A Rhind**

Vice Conveners (2) – **Mr B Lobban** - with consideration of the second Vice-Convenor position being **DEFERRED** to the Special Meeting of the Council in August

Vice Chair of Resources Committee – **Mr A MacKinnon**

Vice Chairs (2) of Education, Children and Adult Services Committee – **Mrs I Campbell and Mrs F Robertson**

Vice Chair of Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee – **Mr M Reiss**

Vice Chair of Community Services Committee – **Mr R Greene**

Chair of Pensions Committee – **Mr D Fallows**

Vice Chair of Highland Licensing Committee -

Mr A Henderson, seconded by Mr A Rhind, nominated Mr R Greene.

Ms Maxine Smith, seconded by Mr A Duffy, nominated Mrs G Sinclair.

Dr D Alston, seconded by Mr T Prag, nominated Mr J Stone.

In a first vote between the three candidates, Mr Greene received 35 votes, Mrs Sinclair received 24 votes and Mr Stone received 12 votes, the votes having been cast as follows:-

Votes for Mr Greene:

Mrs J Barclay, Mr D Bremner, Mrs I Campbell, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mrs G Coghill, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr B Fernie, Mr M Finlayson, Mr H Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr J Gray, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr J Gordon, Mr A Henderson, Mr N MacDonald, Mrs D Mackay, Mr W MacKay, Mr A Mackinnon, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs I McCallum, Mr J McGillivray, Mr H Morrison, Mr B Murphy, Mr F Parr, Mrs F Robertson, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mr J Rosie, Mr G Ross, Mr R Saxon, Dr A Sinclair, Mr B Thompson

Votes for Mrs Sinclair:

Mr A Baxter, Mr I Brown, Mr B Clark, Dr I Cockburn, Mr A Duffy, Mr D Fallows, Mr G Farlow, Mr C Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr D Hendry, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr T MacLennan, Mr G Phillips, Mr M Rattray, Ms G Ross, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith

Votes for Mr Stone:

Dr D Alston, Mr R Balfour, Mrs C Caddick, Mr A Christie, Ms A MacLean, Mr K MacLeod, Ms L Munro, Mr T Prag, Mr G Rimell, Ms K Stephen, Mr J Stone, Mr H Wood

In a second vote between the two remaining candidates, Mr Greene received 41 votes and Mrs Sinclair received 24 votes, the votes having been cast as follows:

Votes for Mr Greene:

Mr R Balfour, Mrs J Barclay, Mr D Bremner, Mrs I Campbell, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mrs G Coghill, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr B Fernie, Mr M Finlayson, Mr L Fraser, Mr H Fraser, Mr J Gordon, Mr J Gray, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr A Henderson, Mr N MacDonald, Mrs D Mackay, Mr D Mackay, Mr W MacKay, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr K MacLeod, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs I McCallum, Mr J McGillivray, Mr H Morrison, Ms L Munro, Mr B Murphy, Mr F Parr, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mr G Rimell, Mrs F Robertson, Mr J Rosie, Mr G Ross, Mr R Saxon, Dr A Sinclair, Ms K Stephen, Mr B Thompson

Votes for Mrs Sinclair:

Mr A Baxter, Mr I Brown, Mr B Clark, Dr I Cockburn, Mr A Duffy, Mr D Fallows, Mr G Farlow, Mr C Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr D Hendry, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr T MacLennan, Mr G Phillips, Mr M Rattray, Ms G Ross, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith.

The Council therefore **AGREED** to appoint **Mr R Greene** as Vice-Chair of the Highland Licensing Committee.

**6. Confirmation of Minutes
Daingneachadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais**

There had been submitted for confirmation as correct records the Minutes of Meeting of the Council held on 14 May 2015 and of the Special Meetings held on 14 May 2015 and 11 June 2015 as contained in the Volume which had been circulated separately which were **APPROVED**.

**7. Minutes of Meetings of Committees
Geàrr-chunntasan Choinneamhan Chomataidhean**

There had been submitted for confirmation as correct records, for information as regards delegated business and for approval as appropriate, the Minutes of Meetings of Committees contained in Volume circulated separately as undernoted:

Education, Children and Adult Services Committee, 20 May
Lochaber Area Committee, 21 May
Caithness and Sutherland Area Committee, 26 May
Resources Committee, 27 May
Gaelic Implementation Group, 28 May
City of Inverness Area Committee, 2 June
Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee, 3 June
Community Services Committee, 4 June
Nairn and Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee, 10 June
Community Safety, Public Engagement and Equalities Committee, 11 June
Audit & Scrutiny Committee, 18 June

The Minutes, having been moved and seconded were, except as undernoted, **APPROVED** – matters arising having been dealt with as follows :—

Resources Committee, 27 May

***Starred Item 5: Pages 1023-1024: Corporate Revenue Near Final Monitoring Report for 2014/15**

The Council **AGREED** that, in relation to any underspend, consideration would be given to Roads Maintenance (as contained in the Director of Finance's report later in the agenda).

Audit & Scrutiny Committee, 18 June

***Starred Item 7: Page 15: Financial Regulations – Proposed Amendments**

Financial Regulation 25.1.1 -

Current Version – The Council has adopted a formal options appraisal process to evaluate and prioritise the projects for inclusion within its Capital Programme. For other projects, including those involving partners and for joint venture initiatives, the project sponsor must ensure that a business case has been established.

Proposed Version – The Council has adopted a formal options appraisal process to evaluate and prioritise the projects for inclusion within its Capital Programme. For other projects, initiatives and areas of significant change (including those involving partners and for joint venture initiatives), the sponsor has to ensure that a Business Case had been established.

Financial Regulation 25.1.3 -

Current Version – All reports (relating to projects) must receive Strategic Committee approval.

Proposed Version – All reports (relating to projects) must receive Strategic Committee approval and identify the proposed project expenditure and the source of funding it. If the project expenditure increases by more than 10% during the project, then the expenditure increase and the source of funding must also receive Strategic Committee approval.

Financial Regulation 9.8 -

Current Version – Maintenance of appropriate costing systems is essential for the regular monitoring of performance and allocation of costs in the financial ledger. Reconciliation of any costing systems not linked to the financial ledger will be carried out by Services on a regular basis.

Proposed Version – Maintenance of appropriate costing systems is essential for the regular monitoring of performance and allocation of costs in the financial ledger. Reconciliation of any costing systems not linked to the financial ledger will be carried out by Services on a regular basis. Services must obtain any necessary guidance from the Finance Service regarding reconciliation processes and the financial ledger and must also agree the process with the Finance Service.

At this point, the Chief Executive drew attention to the proposed revision to Financial Regulation 25.1.3 and specifically the need to seek Strategic Committee approval on each occasion when project expenditure increased by more than 10% during the project. In this regard, he suggested that it might be more feasible to report to Strategic Committees (as opposed to seeking approval) if and when project

expenditure increased by more than 10% in order to reduce delays and lessen the risk of the Council being liable for expenses/claims from contractors.

In response, the Chair of the Committee drew attention to the fact that the proposed revision to this Financial Regulation was based on an Audit Scotland recommendation which had highlighted the need to secure additional assurance in relation to project management and as such he was content with the recommendation from the Committee.

Thereafter, the Chair, seconded by Mr K Gowans, **MOVED** approval of the recommendations from the Committee as detailed.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Dr D Alston, seconded by Mr A Christie, moved that, in light of the advice received from the Chief Executive in relation to Financial Regulation 25.1.3, this issue should be referred back to the next meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for re-consideration with delegated authority to make a decision in this regard.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 55 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 14 votes, with 2 abstentions, and the **MOTION** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr R Balfour, Mr A Baxter, Mr I Brown, Mrs C Caddick, Mrs I Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr B Clark, Dr I Cockburn, Mrs G Coghill, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Duffy, Mr D Fallows, Mr G Farlow, Mr B Fernie, Mr M Finlayson, Mr C Fraser, Mr H Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr J Gordon, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr A Henderson, Mr D Hendry, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mrs D Mackay, Mr D Mackay, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr A Mackinnon, Ms A MacLean, Mr T MacLennan, Mrs I McCallum, Mr J McGillivray, Mr D Millar, Mr H Morrison, Mr G Phillips, Mr M Rattray, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mrs F Robertson, Mr J Rosie, Ms G Ross, Mr G Ross, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Ms K Stephen, Mr J Stone, Mr B Thompson.

For the Amendment:

Dr D Alston, Mrs J Barclay, Miss J Campbell, Mr A Christie, Ms J Douglas, Mr J Gray, Mr N MacDonald, Mr K MacLeod, Mrs B McAllister, Mr B Murphy, Mr F Parr, Mr T Prag, Mr G Rimell, Mr R Saxon.

Abstentions:

Ms L Munro, Mr L Fraser

Decision

The Council **AGREED** the amendments to Financial Regulations as detailed.

**8. Highland and Western Isles Valuation Joint Board
Co-Bhòrd Luachaidh na Gàidhealtachd is nan Eilean Siar**

There had been circulated Minutes of Meeting of the Valuation Joint Board held on 28 January 2015 which were **NOTED**.

**9. Community Challenge Fund – Minute of Meeting
Maoin Dùbhlain Coimhearsnachd – Geàrr-chunntas Coinneimh**

There had been circulated Minutes of Meeting of the Community Challenge Fund Applications Panel held on 17 June 2015 which were **APPROVED**.

**10. Customer Services Board
Bòrd Sheirbheisean Luchd-ceannach**

There had been circulated Minutes of Meetings of the Customer Services Board held on 25 May and 15 June 2015 which were **NOTED**.

In this regard, the Chair of the Board acknowledged the work which had been undertaken and extended thanks to the individuals and community groups who had contributed to the consultation.

**11. Question Time
Àm Ceiste**

The following Questions had been received by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development in terms of Standing Order 42 –

(i) Mr A Baxter

To the Chair of the Resources Committee

“Will you make a statement on the outcome of the Customer Service Review and in particular the anticipated financial impact on those staff where a Service Point would be converted to a High Life Highland Partnership Service Point or an Access Point located in a library?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mr Baxter queried whether the Chair of the Resources Committee was aware that High Life Highland staff were being downgraded as a result of this decision with some staff losing up to £180 per month.

In response, the Chair of the Resources Committee confirmed that the Board had carried out the necessary work and the decision which had been reached would stand.

(ii) Mr A Baxter

To the Chair of the Community Services Committee

“What is the new Administration's policy on the construction of an extension to the A830 which would establish a link road between Caol and Fort William?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mr Baxter queried whether the Chair of the Community Services Committee would answer the original question as to whether the new Administration saw the Caol Link Road as an urgent priority.

In response, the Chair of the Community Services Committee confirmed that this was the case.

(iii) Ms M Smith

To the Chair of the Resources Committee

“How do you intend to consult on the gap in the budget for 2016/17 onwards?”

In terms of a supplementary question, Ms Smith queried whether the Chair of the Resources Committee was intending to protect the Education Service when it came to budget cuts in the same way that the SNP-led Administration had in the previous year.

In response, the Chair of the Resources Committee confirmed that the new Administration would certainly attempt to protect the Education Service as much as was possible.

(iv) Mr B Lobban

To the Leader of the Council

“Will the Leader of the Council commit to engaging in discussions with the Scottish Government with a view to minimising the effect of the latest round of UK Conservative Government budget cuts on the people of the Highlands?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mr Lobban queried as to what was the likely total financial impact of the Conservative Government cuts on the people of the Highlands.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that this issue had emerged over recent years at the Welfare Reform Working Group and would continue to be raised as the impact was expected to be considerable. It was also anticipated that there would be more welfare cuts announced imminently and this was something in which the whole Council needed to be engaged.

(v) Mr R Laird

To the Leader of the Council

“How will the Leader update the Council on the business and decisions of the CoSLA Leaders’ Group?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mr Laird queried whether, in light of the fact that the CoSLA Leaders Group was currently dealing with requests from Labour led Central Belt Councils to remove the rurality weighting from the national Local Government Distribution Formula, the Leader would work with the SNP and other Groups in CoSLA to resist this attempt to take money from the Highlands and to give it to the Central Belt.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that she would work with whatever groups were necessary in CoSLA in order to protect the settlement for the Highlands.

(vi) Mr G Phillips

To the Chair of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee

“What are the Administration’s proposals for reviving the economy of the peripheral areas in Highland officially identified as fragile?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mr Phillips queried whether the Chair would undertake to bring a report to next PDI Committee to pull together a coherent strategy to address the Council’s approach to all of these issues and a plan of action to address the issues faced by fragile communities.

In response, the Chair of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee confirmed that she would ask for a report to be brought back to the Committee. Taking into consideration the imminent summer recess, she could not commit to it being the next meeting but it would be given priority.

(vii) Mrs D MacKay

To the Leader of the Council

“How does the Administration intend to ensure as many as possible working families in the Highlands benefit from the Living Wage by extending its reach to the Council’s supply chain?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mrs MacKay queried as to whether, as well as incentivising firms to pay the living wage, the Leader would extend the criteria by also rewarding firms who did not employ staff on zero hours contracts, who provided their staff with employment and training opportunities and real community benefit and, in the event of the City Deal becoming a reality, ensure that all contractors involved with the project signed up to the living wage, equality and non-discrimination in the workforce.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that she could not provide a full response to this detailed supplementary question at the meeting but would discuss with the Head of People and Performance and provide a written reply in due course.

(viii) Mr J Gray

To the Leader of the Council

“The Labour Group was encouraged by the sentiments expressed by you at the Inverness City and Area Committee that your priority would be to protect the wages and condition of staff. How do you intend as the new Leader of Highland Council to take this forward?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mr Gray queried as to whether the Leader would recommit to protecting the wages and conditions of staff as she had previously stated.

In response, the Leader of the Council referred to the Council's excellent record of working with staff and avoiding compulsory redundancies over the last decade and confirmed that the Administration was committed to avoiding compulsory redundancies wherever possible.

(ix) Mr R Saxon

To the Leader of the Council

“Given your often expressed views of the importance of strengthening the scrutiny role of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee, how can this be reconciled with the appointment of a Chair of that Committee from a party which is part of a confidence and supply arrangement with the new Administration?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mr Saxon queried whether the Leader and the Chair of the Resources Committee were fully aware of the implications for the Council if this was not the case.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the minority Administration was working in a consensual way across the Council and hoped to see engagement from other Members in this, including Mr Saxon.

(x) Mr T Prag

To the Chair of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee

“Given the significance for Inverness and the Highlands of the City Deal, could we get an update on what stage discussions have reached with the UK and Scottish Governments?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, Mr Prag queried as to whether the Chair could confirm that there would be no change in the Council's agreed decisions relating to the West Link Option 6 and its related projects.

In response, the Chair of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee confirmed that she was unaware of any reason to change the decisions that had already been made in this regard.

(xi) Mr A Christie

To the Leader of the Council

“Could you inform the Council as to the timetable you are working towards in proposing a budget for 2016/2017, including consultation with communities and reports to Committees?”

The response had been circulated.

In terms of a supplementary question, and in light of the need to make early progress with setting the budget for the following year, Mr Christie queried as to who would be accountable for leading on this matter.

In response, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the Chair of the Resources Committee would be leading on the budget.

Decision

The Council **NOTED** the position.

12. Notice of Motion Brathan Glusaid

The following Notices of Motion had been received in accordance with Standing Order 10.1 –

(i) “The Highland Council congratulates Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC on winning the Scottish Cup and qualifying for the UEFA Europa League. The Council believes this success should be celebrated as one for the whole Highlands and wishes both ICTFC and Ross County FC the best of luck for the 2015-16 season and beyond”.

Signed: Mr R Laird, Mr H Morrison

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- this was the greatest footballing achievement that the Highlands had ever seen and it had put Highland football firmly on the map;
- it was extremely important that the fantastic support at Hampden was now continued and that as many people as possible went along to the Stadium at the end of July to witness the very first European fixture to be played in the Highlands;
- the purchase of season tickets and filling the Stadium on a regular basis thereafter would demonstrate to the Club that it continued to have the full support of the City and would provide the necessary finance to enable them to build on the current success;
- the Club had a very good record of encouraging young people to become involved in football and this was welcomed;
- the success of the Club continued to benefit the Highlands, including on an economic level, and this was vitally important; and
- there was a need to also recognise the success of Brora Rangers in the current season, not least on becoming only the second team in the history of the Highland League to go through a whole season undefeated.

Decision

The Council **AGREED** the terms of the Notice of Motion as detailed.

It was also **AGREED** that the congratulations of the Council should be conveyed to Brora Rangers in relation to their success in the Scottish Senior League Championship and on being only the second team in history of the Highland League to go through a whole season undefeated.

(ii) “The Highland Council agrees that, in planning future budgets, all voluntary and third sector organisations in receipt of grant from the Highland Council will have at least one year’s notice of any reduction in their grant and will therefore be able to plan ahead with knowledge of this level of support from the Highland Council”.

Signed: Dr D Alston, Mr J Stone, Mr H Wood

Declarations of Interest - the following Members declared non-financial interests in this item but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion:-

Mr G Ross and Mr H Wood as Members of the Highland Disability Sport Association;

Mr R Saxon on the grounds of being Chair of Thurso Youth Club and member of the Board of Caithness Horizons;

Mr J Stone on the grounds of a close family relative being a volunteer at Tain Museum;

Mr B Lobban on the grounds of being an advisor to Grantown Museum; and

Mr D Fallows on the grounds of being a Director of the Society of Badenoch and Strathspey Artists.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- over the past decade, the Council had improved their budget planning processes and their fairness in dealing with partners in the voluntary sector, including giving a minimum of one year's notice to voluntary organisations prior to grants being cut as a result of budget savings proposals;
- many organisations were small and their planning processes were unduly affected by cuts at short notice and this had to be recognised;
- the previous Administration had agreed a 5% reduction in grants to third sector organisations for 2016-17, with a further 45% reduction to the overall budget in later years, and this policy (which was already in the process of being implemented) should be continued;
- the term 'grant' did not reflect the nature of the dynamic partnership with the third sector as some organisations had funding contracts with Service Level Agreements;
- it was difficult for voluntary organisations to develop business plans when facing uncertain funding situations;
- the Notice of Motion was intended to ensure that although it would be necessary to cut funding, there would be a regular implementation of a fair notice period;
- a considerable amount of third sector expenditure was on salaries and adequate notice was essential to safeguard jobs and to allow people time to seek alternative employment in the event of cuts;
- plans were in place to give affected groups adequate notice of the 5% reduction and the further 45% cut had been fully publicised and it therefore made sense to await the outcome of the review before making further decisions on the matter; and
- it was understood that a proposal was likely to be put forward by registered social landlords to work with third sector organisations and charities to help them mitigate the effects of cuts and if this was to be the case then this process would need time to be followed through.

Thereafter, Mr D Alston, seconded by Mr J Stone and Mr H Wood, **MOVED** the Notice of Motion as detailed.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr G Ross, seconded by Ms M Smith, moved that the new Independent Administration should continue with the previous Administration's plans for funding payments for services to voluntary and third sector organisations until such time as the review was complete and the findings known.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 13 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 61 votes, with no abstentions, and the **AMENDMENT** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Dr D Alston, Mrs C Caddick, Mr A Christie, Ms J Douglas, Ms A MacLean, Mr K MacLeod, Ms L Munro, Mr T Prag, Mr G Rimell, Ms K Stephen, Mr J Stone, Mrs C Wilson, Mr H Wood

For the Amendment:

Mr R Balfour, Mrs J Barclay, Mr A Baxter, Mr D Bremner, Mr I Brown, Mrs I Campbell, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr B Clark, Dr I Cockburn, Mrs G Coghill, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Duffy, Mr D Fallows, Mr G Farlow, Mr B Fernie, Mr M Finlayson, Mr C Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr H Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr J Gordon, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr J Gray, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr A Henderson, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr N MacDonald, Mrs D Mackay, Mr D Mackay, Mr W MacKay, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr T MacLennan, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs I McCallum, Mr J McGillivray, Mr D Millar, Mr H Morrison, Mr B Murphy, Mr F Parr, Mr G Phillips, Mr M Rattray, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mrs F Robertson, Mr J Rosie, Ms G Ross, Mr G Ross, Mr R Saxon, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson.

Decision

The Council **AGREED** that the new Independent Administration should continue with the previous Administration's plans for funding payments for services to voluntary and third sector organisations until such time as the review was complete and the findings known.

(iii) "The Highland Council recommit itself to actively campaigning for fair funding for NHS Highland in line with the agreed national formula".

Signed: Mr A Christie, Ms K Stephen, Mrs C Caddick

Declarations of Interest -

Dr D Alston declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Board Member of NHS Highland but, in terms of the dispensation granted by the Standards Commission, remained to participate in the discussion and voting.

Mr I Brown declared a financial interest in this item as an employee of NHS Highland and left the room.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- this Notice of Motion was principally about fairness in that the Highlands were not achieving parity in terms of their share of the NRAC funding;
- underfunding of NHS Highland was contributing to its financial problems;
- with increasing pressure on budgets, and people living longer with often more complex health conditions, it was vital that NHS Highland received full funding, not least in regard to long term strategic planning;
- the Public Audit Committee report which had been issued on 17 June 2015 had contained details of what had been described as 'financial mismanagement' with a recommendation for the NHS Highland Board and Senior Management to review practices and this had to be taken into account;

- given the review of the funding formula which was currently underway, it was perhaps preferable to leave these discussions to NHS Highland;
- the actual causes of overspending had not been fully established and this was relevant in considering this issue;
- for clarity, it was confirmed that the Notice of Motion concerned the funding, and not the management, of NHS Highland;
- in terms of the integration process, it was pointed out that major change created challenges which were likely to take a decade to become properly embedded;
- the problems being faced by NHS Highland were considered to be clinical in nature, rather than wholly financial, and in this respect the decision by NHS Highland to employ additional Depute Directors was questioned;
- it had to be stressed that there was no criticism of the NHS staff who were currently delivering frontline services; and
- NHS Highland had already responded positively to the Public Audit Committee report and this should be recognised, along with the fact that the organisation was a valued partner of the Council as both organisations followed the Lead Agency model for Integration.

Thereafter, Mr A Christie, seconded by Ms K Stephen, **MOVED** the Notice of Motion as detailed.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mrs M Davidson, seconded by Mr A Rhind, moved that it could be seen from the recent Public Audit Committee report on NHS Highland's financial management that the latter were very close to the commitment from the Scottish Government to be within 1% of their agreed settlement and it was therefore for NHS Highland to negotiate that gap with the Scottish Government.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 25 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 48 votes, with 1 abstention, and the **AMENDMENT** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Dr D Alston, Mr D Bremner, Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mr A Christie, Mrs G Coghill, Mr J Crawford, Ms J Douglas, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mrs B McAllister, Mr N MacDonald, Mrs D Mackay, Ms A MacLean, Mr K MacLeod, Ms L Munro, Mr B Murphy, Mr F Parr, Mr T Prag, Mr G Rimell, Mr R Saxon, Ms K Stephen, Mr J Stone, Mrs C Wilson, Mr H Wood

For the Amendment:

Mr R Balfour, Mrs J Barclay, Mr A Baxter, Mrs I Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr B Clark, Dr I Cockburn, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Duffy, Mr D Fallows, Mr G Farlow, Mr B Fernie, Mr M Finlayson, Mr C Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr H Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr J Gordon, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr A Henderson, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr D Mackay, Mr W MacKay, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr T MacLennan, Mrs I McCallum, Mr J McGillivray, Mr H Morrison, Mr G Phillips, Mr M Rattray, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mrs F Robertson, Mr J Rosie, Ms G Ross, Mr G Ross, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson.

Abstention:

Mr D Millar

Decision

The Council **AGREED** that it could be seen from the recent Public Audit Committee report on NHS Highland's financial management that the latter were very close to the commitment from the Scottish Government to be within 1% of their agreed settlement and it was therefore for NHS Highland to negotiate that gap with the Scottish Government.

The Council adjourned for lunch from 1.10pm until 2.00pm.

(iv) "We believe the current practice of appointing the Leader and Depute Leader of the Council, in ex officio with full voting rights, to all Strategic Committees is undemocratic. We therefore ask the Council to agree that this practice should no longer be adopted".

Signed: Mr A Baxter, Mrs M Davidson, Ms M Smith, Mr T MacLennan, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the practice of appointing the Leader and Depute Leader had been carried forward from previous Councils and was no longer appropriate;
- no other Council currently allowed ex officio Members on Committees to have voting rights;
- the fact that the Council now had a minority Administration and a number of minority Opposition Groups made this the most appropriate time to make this change; and
- consideration should now be given to increasing the membership of the Community Safety, Public Engagement and Equalities Committee to 22 Members in line with the other Strategic Committees.

Decision

The Council **AGREED** the terms of the Notice of Motion as detailed.

13. Annual Accounts for the Year to 31 March 2015 Aithris Chunntasan Neo-sgrùdaichte airson na Bliadhna gu 31 Màrt 2015

There had been circulated Report No. HC/23/15 dated 16 June 2015 by the Director of Finance which presented the Annual Accounts for the year to 31 March 2015 for the Highland Council, Highland Charities Trust, Highland Council Charitable Trusts and the Highland Council Pension Fund.

The report also considered the balance held in the non-earmarked General Fund of the Council.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- thanks should be conveyed to the Finance Staff for the work undertaken in relation to this report;
- further information was required on the work being undertaken in relation to the governance surrounding the Highland Charities Trust and Highland Council Charitable Trusts;
- the proposal to allocate additional funding to Road Maintenance was welcomed as this was a major issue across the whole of the Highland area;

- it would be important for reports to be presented to Strategic Committees to explain in more detail the year end variances from Service budgets;
- strengthening the arrangements for governance in relation to project management was vital and it was hoped that early reports in this respect would be presented to both the Audit & Scrutiny Committee and the full Council; and
- in light of the debate earlier in the meeting, it was suggested that £0.200m should be taken from proposed allocation of £0.500m to the Strategic Change and Development Fund and allocated instead to the Third Sector Grant Fund to offset the 50% cut identified in the budget savings.

Decision

The Council:-

- (i) **APPROVED** the unaudited Annual Accounts for the Highland Council, Highland Charities Trust, Highland Council Charitable Trust and the Highland Council Pension Fund for the year ended 31 March 2015 and **NOTED** that they would be presented to the appointed Auditor by the prescribed date of 30 June 2015;
- (ii) **NOTED** that reports would be presented to the Strategic Committees to explain in more detail the year end variances from Service budgets; and
- (iii) **AGREED** the use of funds in excess of the reserves strategy currently in the non-earmarked balance of the General Fund as recommended in Paragraph 4 of the report – subject to the following amendment – Strategic Change and Development Fund (£0.300m) and Third Sector Grant Fund (£0.200m).

It was also **NOTED** that a report would be submitted to the next meeting to provide information on the work being undertaken in relation to the governance surrounding the Highland Charities Trust and Highland Council Charitable Trusts which had been highlighted within the report.

14. Revenue Budget 2015/16 – 2018/19 - Updated Financial Forecast Buidseat Teachd-a-steach 2015/16 – 2018/19 – Ro-aithris Ionmhasail Ùraichte

Declaration of Interest - Ms G Ross declared a financial interest in this item on the grounds of her husband being a teacher at Thurso High School and confirmed that she would leave the room if there was any specific discussion in relation to pensions for teachers.

There had been circulated Report No. HC/24/15 dated 16 June 2015 by the Director of Finance which provided an update on the present budget position and highlighted new and additional financial risks in the current financial year 2015/16 and a significant amended budget gap for the three year period 2016/19.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- this was the most serious financial situation faced by the Council to date and in this regard the Administration had now set up a Budget Team to scrutinise every line of the budget in order to explore possible savings and efficiencies;
- all Members of the Council should and would be invited to become involved in the identification of savings;
- one of the fundamental issues to be focused on would be the current Council Tax freeze although it was noted that notification on whether this was to be continued by the Scottish Government was not expected until the Autumn;

- more information was required in relation to the situation regarding savings linked to teacher numbers;
- consideration had to be given as to how services could be provided differently in future and if necessary unpalatable decisions taken in this regard;
- it was the duty of the Council to challenge both the UK and Scottish Governments if and when necessary in relation to issues of importance to the Highlands;
- the appointment of the Commercial Manager was welcomed and it was expected that a report would now come forward to the Resources Committee in the near future to allow consideration of proposals and ideas in this respect;
- issues such as Teacher Numbers and Pupil/Teacher Ratio and National Insurance highlighted the need for devolvement of power to a local level;
- it was important that no potential recommendations or decisions were ruled out before consideration had been given to all options;
- the current national pay negotiations needed to await further discussion with the Trade Unions and this would have implications for other aspects of the budget over the coming months;
- the potential impact of UK Government decisions on the Grant Settlement were very concerning, not least because it was expected that such decisions would have a severe effect on public sector finances over the next few years;
- this situation represented a 'state of emergency' for the Highland Council financial situation and as such it was imperative that all Members put politics to one side in order to ensure that the budget to be agreed in February represented the best possible outcome for the people of the Highlands;
- it was important that rural and economic social impact assessments were undertaken on the basis of 'place' and not 'broad themes' wherever possible with decisions being based on fact which could be clearly demonstrated to local communities;
- involvement of partners in future budgetary discussions was vital, not least in order to establish a common understanding in relation to fragile communities where the effect of cumulative cuts could be far reaching;
- there was a need for a cross-party Group from within the Council to seek a meeting with the Deputy First Minister and other Scottish Government Officials over the coming months if possible in order to discuss the current situation and the issues of importance to the Highlands;
- it was vital that all Members of the Council were fully aware of the potential impact of the UK Government's policy of austerity on the Highlands and that as much work as possible was undertaken on the prevention of poverty wherever possible; and
- there was a need for all Members to work together on the budget process as this is what would be expected by the people of the Highlands.

Decision

The Council noted the additional budget pressures of £2.601m in 2015/16 and **AGREED** that these be met from the reported surplus from 2014/15.

It was also **AGREED** to set aside the budget saving of £0.12m in respect of Winter Maintenance as agreed in December 2014 and as outlined in Paragraph 2.4 of the report.

The Council further **NOTED** the forecast changes to the financial forecasts and revised budget gaps for the following three financial years 2016/17-2018/19 of £46.288m and the budget implications as set out in Section 5 of the report.

15. **Update on the Review of Area Committees and Local Community Planning Arrangements**
Cunntas às Ùr mu Ath-sgrùdadh Chomataidhean Sgìreil agus Ullachaidhean Dealbhaidh Coimhearsnachd Ionadail

There had been circulated Report No. HC/25/15 dated 15 June 2015 by the Head of Policy and Reform which provided a further update on the progress being made to review Area Committees and local community planning arrangements based on workshops with Members locally and advised of the support from the Highland Community Planning Partnership for partnership discussions locally to improve local community planning arrangements. It was considered that the ideas for localism emerging should support the Council and its partners to meet the new requirements of the Community Empowerment legislation.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the work which had been undertaken to date was acknowledged and appreciated and it was stressed that there was a need for it to now move on quickly over the next few months;
- there was a need for consideration of best practice in regard to all models of service delivery across the Highlands in order to assess what could be taken forward or replicated;
- further and more detailed statistical information on the review of Area Committees was required at an early date, including staffing and other costs;
- working with Community Councils and other community groups in future could be very productive, not least in terms of distribution of community benefit funds wherever possible;
- a decision was needed at an early date on whether to continue with Area Committees in their present form;
- if Area Committees were to continue, there was a need to consider further delegation of budgets/powers where possible;
- clarity was required on how the proposals within the report would be costed and implemented, particularly in view of the budget discussion which had been undertaken earlier in the meeting;
- it was vital that there was awareness of fragile areas in the Highlands and also areas of rural deprivation and in this regard a meeting should be sought with the new Local Government Minister to discuss community planning at a local level;
- it would be important to exercise great care and to reflect fully before changing existing structures in order to achieve the correct balance for the future; and
- structured consultation exercises, with the full involvement of the public, had been undertaken in the past and they had been extremely beneficial in terms of taking account of the views and suggestions of local people in relation to the future delivery of local services in their areas.

Decision

The Council **NOTED** the progress being made since the update provided in May 2015, that the Workshops with Members in Sutherland and Caithness and the follow up discussions in some Wards in Skye, Ross and Cromarty supported the two different models reported previously (one combining Council and partner business with community involvement into a community partnership and the other focusing more on the Area Committee with distinct governance, aligned to District

Partnerships and supported by Ward Forums) and that participatory budgeting was to be tried in several localities in 2015/16 using different approaches.

The Council **AGREED** to the next steps as set out in Paragraph 4.5 of the report, for discussions with partners and community bodies in Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey, Caithness and Sutherland, to consider the different options around localities for governance within Skye, Ross and Cromarty and to identify an experiment, and for further reports to come forward on the requirements of the new Community Empowerment legislation to ensure the early experiments enable full compliance with the Act.

It was also **NOTED** that amendments to the Council Programme on community empowerment would be reported to the meeting of the Council in August 2015.

16. **Community Councils** **Comhairlean Coimhearsnachd**

(i) Highland Community Council Scheme Amendments

There had been circulated Report No. HC/26/15 dated 1 June 2015 by the Head of Policy and Reform which provided an update on topical issues for Community Councils including Community Council elections in November 2015.

The report also sought approval to amend certain aspects of the Scheme and proposed that the next full review of the Scheme should not begin until after May 2017 to allow new Community Councils an opportunity to settle in and to contribute to the discussions on their role in strengthening local democracy with some new arrangements tested in some areas.

During discussion, it was suggested that a strong media campaign should be implemented in order to highlight the Community Council elections.

It was also suggested that, in regard to the review of the Scheme, time should be allowed for full consultation with Community Councils and feedback provided thereafter in terms of issues raised.

Decision

The Council **NOTED** that elections would take place for all Community Councils in the current year with the process beginning in August 2015.

The Council **AGREED** to amend the Highland Community Council Scheme of Establishment as outlined at Section 6.1 of the report which included removing Section 14.3 of the Scheme and updating populations and corresponding changes in membership formula.

It was also **AGREED** that boundary decisions should be delegated to devolved administrative areas e.g. Area Committees or alternative arrangements.

It was further **AGREED** that an overall review of the Community Council Scheme should not commence before May 2017 to enable new Councils to settle in and contribute to the discussions on their role in strengthening local democracy with some new arrangements to be tested in some areas over the next two years.

At this point, Mr J Gray, seconded by Mrs B McAllister, **MOVED** that Items 16(ii) and 16(iii) should be referred to the respective Area Committees for discussion and agreement.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr R Laird, seconded by Mr D Kerr, moved that the items should be considered at this meeting as detailed on the agenda.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 23 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 24 votes, with 5 Abstentions, and the **AMENDMENT** was therefore **CARRIED**, votes having been cast as follows –

For the Motion:

Dr D Alston, Mr R Balfour, Mrs J Barclay, Mr I Brown, Mrs C Caddick, Mrs I Campbell, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr M Finlayson, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mr N MacDonald, Ms A MacLean, Mr K MacLeod, Mrs B McAllister, Mr F Parr, Mr T Prag, Mr G Ross, Mr R Saxon, Mr H Wood

For the Amendment:

Mr A Baxter, Mr B Clark, Dr I Cockburn, Mr D Fallows, Mr B Fernie, Mr C Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr M Green, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr T Maclennan, Mr G Phillips, Mr M Rattray, Ms G Ross, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson

Abstentions:

Mr H Fraser, Mrs I McCallum, Mr M Reiss, Mrs F Robertson, Dr A Sinclair

(ii) Central Community Council

There had been circulated Report No. HC/27/15 dated 4 May 2015 by the Head of Policy & Reform which outlined the background and approach in an attempt to establish representation for the Central Community Council area in Inverness.

During discussion, it was suggested that the new Community Council (once agreed) should be named either 'Crown & City Centre' Community Council or 'Park & City Centre' Community Council.

Thereafter, Miss J Campbell, seconded by Mr J Gray, **MOVED** approval of Option A within the report - a merger between Central Community Council and Crown Community Council.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr R Laird, seconded by Mr D Kerr, moved approval of Option B within the report - a merger between Central Community Council and Park Community Council.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 29 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 12 votes, with 10 abstentions, and the **MOTION** was therefore **CARRIED**, votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr R Balfour, Mr I Brown, Mrs C Caddick, Mrs I Campbell, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr M Finlayson, Mr C Fraser, Mr H Fraser, Mr L Fraser, Mr J Gray, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr N MacDonald, Mr K MacLeod, Mrs B McAllister, Mr H Morrison, Mr F Parr, Mr T Prag,

Mr M Reiss, Mrs F Robertson, Mr G Ross, Mr R Saxon, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson

For the Amendment:

Dr I Cockburn, Mr D Fallows, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr A Graham, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Ms A MacLean, Mr T MacLennan, Mrs I McCallum, Mr M Rattray, Mrs G Sinclair

Abstentions:

Dr D Alston, Mr B Fernie, Mr S Fuller, Mr A Henderson, Mr B Lobban, Mr L MacDonald, Mr A Mackinnon, Ms G Ross, Dr A Sinclair, Mr H Wood

Decision

The Council **AGREED** Option A – a merger between Central Community Council and Crown Community Council – to be known as ‘Crown & City Centre’ Community Council.

It was also **AGREED** that the new Community Council would operate from November 2015 following elections, that as per the membership formula the new Community Council would have a membership of 13 as per the updated population at June 2015 and the Community Council grant would be recalculated as per the formula agreed by the Council in June 2011 to reflect the merger.

(iii) **Nairn Suburban and Nairn West Community Councils**

There had been circulated Report No. HC/28/15 dated 25 May 2015 by the Head of Policy and Reform which outlined a proposal from Nairn Suburban and Nairn West Community Councils to merge.

Decision

The Council **AGREED** a merger between the Community Councils as detailed and that the Highland Community Council Scheme of Establishment be amended to reflect that the new Community Council (Nairn West and Suburban) would operate from November 2015 following elections, that the new Community Council would have a membership of 11 as per the membership formula detailed within the Scheme and that the Community Council grant would be recalculated as per the formula agreed by the Council in June 2011 to reflect the merger.

**17. Adoption of Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan
Gabhail ri Plana Leasachaidh Ionadail LinneMhoireibh A-staigh**

Declaration of Interest - Mrs L MacDonald declared a financial interest in this item on the grounds of owning land at Kingsteps, Nairn.

There had been circulated Report No. HC/29/15 dated 8 June 2015 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure which sought a decision from the Council to adopt the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan as modified following receipt of the Report of Examination.

In this regard, Members were reminded that the Reporter’s recommendations for modifying the Plan were binding upon the Council, except in very exceptional circumstances which did not apply in this case.

Decision

The Council **AGREED** to adopt the Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan as modified and published following receipt of the Report of Examination, noting that the Reporter's recommendations were binding upon the Council.

18. Scheme of Delegation/Elected Members Roles and Responsibilities Sgeama Tiomnaidh /Dreuchdan is Dleastanasan nam Ball Taghte

There had been circulated Report No. HC/30/15 dated 17 June 2015 by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development which outlined a proposal for amendment to the Council's Scheme of Delegation and to Elected Members Roles and Responsibilities.

At this point, Mr J Gray, seconded by Mr T Prag, **MOVED** that this item should be considered at the City of Inverness Area Committee meeting which was scheduled to follow this meeting.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr D Kerr, seconded by Mrs M Davidson, moved that the matter should be considered at this meeting as contained on the agenda.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 14 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 36 votes and the **AMENDMENT** was therefore **CARRIED**, votes having been cast as follows –

For the Motion:

Dr D Alston, Mrs C Caddick, Mr A Christie, Mr C Fraser, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mr N MacDonald, Ms A MacLean, Mr K MacLeod, Mrs B McAllister, Mr F Parr, Mr T Prag, Mr R Saxon, Mr H Wood

For the Amendment:

Mr R Balfour, Mr I Brown, Mrs I Campbell, Miss J Campbell; Mrs H Carmichael, Dr I Cockburn, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr D Fallows, Mr B Fernie, Mr M Finlayson, Mr H Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr A Henderson, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr T MacLennan, Mrs I McCallum, Mr H Morrison, Mr M Rattray, Mr M Reiss, Mrs F Robertson, Ms G Ross, Mr G Ross, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson

Thereafter, Mrs M Davidson, seconded by Mr J Crawford, **MOVED** that the roles of Leader of the City/Area (Inverness) and Provost of Inverness should be combined and in future this position referred to as 'Provost and Leader of Inverness' as detailed in the report.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr T Prag, seconded by Mr A Christie, moved the retention of the status quo on the basis that the political leadership role should not be combined with the civic role in Inverness.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 34 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 14 votes, with 1 abstention, and the **MOTION** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr R Balfour, Mr I Brown, Mrs I Campbell, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Dr I Cockburn, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr D Fallows, Mr B Fernie, Mr M Finlayson, Mr C Fraser, Mr H Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr

M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr A Henderson, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mr L MacDonald, Mr A Mackinnon, Mrs I McCallum, Mr H Morrison, Mr M Reiss, Mrs F Robertson, Ms G Ross, Mr G Ross, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson

For the Amendment:

Dr D Alston, Mrs C Caddick, Mr A Christie, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mr D Kerr, Mr N MacDonald, Ms A MacLean, Mr K MacLeod, Mrs B McAllister, Mr F Parr, Mr T Prag, Mr R Saxon, Mr H Wood

Abstentions:

Mr M Rattray

Decision

The Council **AGREED** that the roles of Leader of the City/Area (Inverness) and Provost of Inverness should be combined and in future this position referred to as 'Provost and Leader of Inverness and Area' as detailed in the report.

**19. Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA)
Co-chruinneachadh Ùghdarrasan Ionadail na h-Alba**

It was confirmed that the Council was entitled to appoint 5 Members to the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA).

In this regard, the following nominations for these places - in accordance with the formula (2/2/1) – were tabled and **AGREED** at the meeting –

Mrs M Davidson
Mrs I McCallum
Ms M Smith
Mr R Laird
Dr D Alston

**20. Appointments to the Health and Social Care Committee
Cur an Dreuchd gu Comataidh na Slainte is a' Shoisealta**

It was confirmed that the Council had been asked to appoint 3 Members to the Health and Social Care Committee and in this regard the following nominations had been tabled at the meeting by the Administration - Mrs M Davidson, Mr H Fraser and Mr B Gormley.

At this point, Ms A MacLean, seconded by Mrs C Caddick, nominated Mr A Christie.

On a vote being taken, Mrs Davidson received 37 votes, Mr Fraser received 33 votes, Mr Gormley received 22 votes and Mr Christie received 17 votes, votes having been cast as follows:-

Votes for Mrs Davidson:

Mr R Balfour, Mr A Baxter, Mr I Brown, Mrs I Campbell, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Dr I Cockburn, Mr J Crawford, Mrs M Davidson, Mr D Fallows, Mr B Fernie, Mr C Fraser, Mr H Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr A Henderson, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr T MacLennan, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs I McCallum, Mr H Morrison, Mr M Rattray, Mr M Reiss, Mrs F Robertson, Ms G Ross, Mr G Ross, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson

Votes for Mr Fraser:

Mr R Balfour, Mr I Brown, Mrs I Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Dr I Cockburn, Mrs M Davidson, Mr D Fallows, Mr B Fernie, Mr C Fraser, Mr H Fraser, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr A Henderson, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mr N MacDonald, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr T MacLennan, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs I McCallum, Mr F Parr, Mr M Reiss, Mrs F Robertson, Ms G Ross, Mr G Ross, Mr R Saxon, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson

Votes for Mr Gormley:

Mr A Baxter, Mr I Brown, Dr I Cockburn, Mrs M Davidson, Mr D Fallows, Mr B Fernie, Mr C Fraser, Mr S Fuller, Mr B Gormley, Mr K Gowans, Mr A Henderson, Mr D Kerr, Mr R Laird, Mr B Lobban, Mrs L MacDonald, Mr A Mackinnon, Mr T MacLennan, Ms G Ross, Dr A Sinclair, Mrs G Sinclair, Mrs J Slater, Ms M Smith

Votes for Mr Christie:

Dr D Alston, Mrs C Caddick, Mr A Christie, Mr A Graham, Mr M Green, Mr R Greene, Mr N MacDonald, Ms A MacLean, Mr K MacLeod, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs I McCallum, Mr F Parr, Mr T Prag, Mr M Rattray, Mr G Ross, Mr R Saxon, Mr H Wood

The Council therefore **AGREED** to appoint the following 3 Members to the Health and Social Care Committee –

Mrs M Davidson
Mr H Fraser
Mr B Gormley

**21. Timetable of Meetings
Clàr-ama Choinneamhan**

The Council **AGREED** the following changes to the dates of meetings in the current year:-

Highland Council – additional Special Meeting - 13 August
Gaelic Implementation Group – to move from 13 August to 25 August

**22. Recess Powers
Cumhachdan Fosaidh**

The Council **AGREED** that, during the recess period, powers should be granted to the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development and Directors, in consultation with the Convener, Leader of the Council, Depute Leader of the Council, relevant Chair and the Leader of the Opposition, to deal with issues arising during that time and that a report should be prepared for the first meeting of the Council or relevant Committee following the period where these powers had been exercised.

**23. Deeds Executed
Sgrìobhainnean Lagha a Bhuilicheadh**

It was **NOTED** that a list of deeds and other documents executed on behalf of the Council since the meeting held on 14 May 2015 was available in the Members' Library and on the Council's Website.

The meeting ended at 5.45pm.