

The Highland Council

3 September, 2015

Agenda Item	8
Report No	HC/31/15

Highland First Additions

Report by Chief Executive

Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise members of proposed additions to the approved programme for the Council 'Highland First'.

1. Background

1.1 At the Council meeting on 13 August, 2015 members agreed the Highland Council Programme 'Highland First'.

It was also agreed to finalise the Highland Council Programme 'Highland First' for the Council meeting in September - taking into account the additions suggested at the meeting from the SNP and Liberal Democrat Groups as well as from Councillor J Douglas.

1.2 Members also agreed to re-commit to the Programme 'Working Together for the Highlands' and that a separate report would be submitted setting out those commitments which had been completed and those which were on-going commitments. This is considered later on the agenda at item 9.

2. Highland First

2.1 Following discussions with Group Leaders, the Independent Group have put forward a number of additions to the Highland Council Programme 'Highland First'. These are set out in appendix 1 which includes the original commitment and the revised/new commitments set out in bold.

Recommendations

Members are asked approve the additions to the Highland Council Programme 'Highland First'.

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 24 August, 2015

Author: Gordon Morrison, Parliamentary Officer

Appendix 1

Additions to the approved Highland First Council Programme

	Existing Commitment		Proposed Commitment
35.	<p>Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work towards achieving Highland's ambition to provide effective broadband and mobile coverage for all. We will work with our partners to develop a joint action plan in order to define and deliver solutions of broadband and mobile technology to the most difficult to reach areas of the Highlands. 	35.	<p>Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will work towards achieving Highland's ambition to provide effective broadband and mobile (3G & 4G) coverage for all. We will work with our partners to develop a joint action plan in order to define and deliver solutions of broadband and mobile technology to the most difficult to reach areas of the Highlands.
36.	<p>Developing Local and National Infrastructure</p> <p>Working with the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, Network Rail, HI-TRANS and HIAL, we will lobby to increase investment in infrastructure in the Highlands with a view to improving the road, rail and air links from the area. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The upgrade of the A9 north of Inverness, including the Berriedale Braes and the Tomich Junction. The upgrade of the A82. Influence the implementation of the A9 South and A96 upgrades. Seek a long term solution for the Strome ferry bypass. 	36.	<p>Developing Local and National Infrastructure</p> <p>Working with the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, Network Rail, HI-TRANS and HIAL, we will lobby to increase investment in infrastructure in the Highlands with a view to improving the road, rail and air links from the area. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The upgrade of the A9 north of Inverness, including the Berriedale Braes and the Tomich Junction. The upgrade of the A82. Influence the implementation of the A9 South and A96 upgrades. Seek a long term solution for the Strome ferry bypass.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing rail journey times north and south of Inverness. • Plan for communities to benefit from additional rail stops. • A long term solution for the Corran Ferry. • Seek improved air-links to and from the Highlands, including direct access to Heathrow. • A831 twin tracking at Torgoyle Bridge. • A830 extension. • Seek additional funding for road and bridge maintenance. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing rail journey times and costs north and south of Inverness. • Plan for communities to benefit from additional rail stops. • A long term solution for the Corran Ferry. • Seek improved air-links to and from the Highlands, including direct access to Heathrow. • A831 twin tracking at Torgoyle Bridge. • A830 extension. • Seek additional funding for road and bridge maintenance.
<p>49.</p>	<p>Poverty and Deprivation With our partners, we will develop an anti-poverty strategy to focus on the needs of the most vulnerable within our communities. This will include maximising incomes, addressing fuel poverty, improving digital access and capability as well as equipping people with the skills to manage their money.</p>	<p>49.</p>	<p>Poverty and Deprivation With our partners, we will develop an anti-poverty strategy that also recognises the issue of poverty in rural areas. It will focus on the needs of the most vulnerable within our communities and help us meet the new legal duties for community planning partnerships to reduce inequalities from socio-economic disadvantage in specific localities. This will include maximising incomes, addressing fuel poverty, improving digital access and capability as well as equipping people with the skills to manage their money.</p>

<p>51. Affordable Housing We will deliver at least another 50 new National Housing Trust homes providing midmarket homes with an option to buy after 5 years. We will also work with the NHS to deliver housing for the elderly via clusters of self-contained houses with care support.</p>	<p>51. Affordable Housing The Council will work with the Scottish Government, Housing Associations, and the private sector to help to deliver 5000 new homes between 2012 and 2017. This will include at least the completion of, or starting on site of 1700 new affordable homes including Council and housing association houses, low cost home ownership and mid-market rent homes. We will also work with the NHS to deliver housing for the elderly via clusters of self-contained houses with care support.</p>
<p>55. Tackling Empty Properties We will work with partners to use the Scheme of Assistance and Empty Property legislation to tackle property disrepair in the private sector, improving housing stock, promoting affordable warmth, and returning empty and substandard property to housing use.</p>	<p>55. Tackling Empty Properties We will work with partners to use the Scheme of Assistance and Empty Property legislation to tackle property disrepair in the private sector, including empty flats and properties above shops, improving housing stock, promoting affordable warmth, and returning empty and substandard property to housing use.</p>
<p>Inverness City – the Capital of the Highlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Health and Wellbeing</u> – Working with our partners we will progress the delivery of a regional sports facility for the Highlands in Inverness incorporating indoor cycling, tennis and athletics as part of our aim of promoting the Highlands as a great place to live, work and visit. 	<p>Inverness City – the Capital of the Highlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Health and Wellbeing</u> – Working with our partners we will progress the delivery of a regional sports facilities for the Highlands in Inverness incorporating indoor cycling, tennis and athletics as part of our aim of promoting the Highlands as a great place to live, work and visit. We will also explore options for a transport schemes so that all of Highland can benefit for this facilities.

	New Commitment (Inserted after commitment 45)	Positive Mental Health and Stigma We will support work across all partners to reduce stigma around mental health and promote good mental health and wellbeing in our communities and our staff. We will have a particular focus on positive mental health for our young people and will support innovative ways to address this issue.
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