

The Highland Council

Sutherland County Committee – 30st August 2016

Agenda Item	3.
Report No	SCC/16/16

Developing Local Priorities for Sutherland (A voice for Sutherland and its People)

Report by Depute Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Development

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the local strategic priorities for Sutherland.

1. Background

- 1.1 Building on the localism agenda and increased delegation of decision making to local committees, each local committee was asked by the Leader to consider developing a set of strategic Council priorities for their area.
- 1.2 It is important to note that these are Council priorities and that there will be opportunity, through the development of local community partnerships, to consider wider shared priorities at a later date.

2. Developing the Sutherland Vision

- 2.1 On 8th August 2016 Sutherland Members were invited to attend a Workshop in Lairg Community Centre Lairg with a view to discussing and considering “Priorities for Sutherland” At that time members were asked to consider:
 - Local priorities for their own ward,
 - Priorities that are common throughout Sutherland,
 - Priorities that reflect the geographical diversity of Sutherland
 - Priorities that give “A voice for Sutherland and its People”.
- 2.2 Members were also asked to distinguish between Council priorities and those that would need partnership discussion and agreement. Council priorities might for example be around harbours, tourism, biosphere, roads, transport, Infrastructure.
- 2.3 A second Workshop is planned for 12th September 2016 to further develop and refine the priorities.

3. Implications

- 3.1 There are no immediate resources, legal, equalities, Climate Change/Carbon Clever Gaelic or rural implications in the report. However the Vision sets out ambitions which would have a positive impact on many of these themes.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- i) consider and agree these draft priorities for Sutherland; and
- ii) agree that the priorities will be further refined following discussion

Designation: Michelle Morris, Depute Chief Executive/ Director of Corporate Development

Date: 17th August 2016

Author: Garry Cameron, Temporary Ward Manager (Sutherland)

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 – A Voice for Sutherland and its People.

Voice for Sutherland and its People

Need to make sure these are realistic.....

Sutherland Summit Actions

- Countering centralisation DANGER
- HIE targeting existing success DANGER
- Loss of European funding DANGER

Economic clearances DAN

- Nordic examples

Transport**

- Encouraging greater use of the rail network for timber extraction
- Promoting the availability and use of community transport and exploring the opportunities of improved transport connections
- Engaging with regional transport providers to improve local out of County transport links
- Improving the dialogue with Scottish Ambulance Service and NHS regarding the challenges around patient transport in Sutherland

Coastal Environment

- Fisheries
- Access to beaches

Economic Development**

- Encouraging inward migration
- Remote area living allowance

Tourism

- Promoting the North Coast 500 as a brand and exploring the opportunities to develop supporting infrastructure such as electric charging points and fuel stations
- Building on the success of the North Coast 500, explore the opportunities for branding in Sutherland to increase tourism for the County.
- Supporting communities to develop Sutherland as tourism destination, e.g. for geniality and cultural tourism, supporting infrastructure such as aires for touring campervans and access to beaches

Infrastructure

- The need to continue to lobby national providers to ensure the roll out of broadband to all communities across Sutherland
- Work with partners and communities to explore the provision of all weather activities facilities
- New crofts and land reform
- Dual tracking
- Infrastructure – harbours and beaches....promoting marinas and commercial
- Forestry management

Employment

- Establishing caring roles as a profession and providing access to that training locally
- Growing your own in relation to care and hospitality employment
- Distance learning Local training, vocational training, post-school education

Inequalities and Fragile Communities

- Fuel poverty
- Health inequalities

Supporting vulnerable Children and Adults within their community**

- Care tourism
- Local respite services
- 8 pillars – dementia friendly
- Childcare provision
- Assisted care for the elderly

Promoting Engagement within our Communities**

- Actively encouraging two-way participation and engagement