

Agenda Item	9
Report No	BSAC/5/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee**

Date: **13 February 2018**

Report Title: **Local Priorities for Badenoch and Strathspey**

Report By: **Head of Policy and Reform**

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the final draft local strategic priorities for Badenoch and Strathspey which were revised following discussion with the Council Leader in October 2017.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Consider and approve the local strategic priorities for Badenoch and Strathspey
 - i. Agree to promote these with the wider Council membership and as part of the Council's Programme 2017-22.
 - ii. Note that there will be opportunity, through the development of the local community partnership and engagement with community bodies and communities to consider wider shared priorities over the Council's term.
 - iii. Note that further work will be done in 2018 to identify how the local priorities agreed can be supported by staff and any other Council resources. This will include considering how best to measure progress. Some priorities are already well aligned to the Council's Programme.

3 Background

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 There will be opportunity, through the development of the local community partnership and other engagement with community bodies and communities to consider wider shared priorities over the Council's term.

4 Developing the Local Priorities for Badenoch and Strathspey

- 4.1 Priorities for the area had previously been agreed at the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee on 16th November 2016. Following discussion with the Council Leader in October 2017 on key issues in the area, the priorities have been revisited by Members and revised local priorities are attached at Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The local priorities reflect the Council's Programme; Local Voices-Highland Choices. It has themes around: a place to live; a place to learn; a place to thrive; a welcoming place; and a redesigned Council. The Badenoch and Strathspey area can contribute to the development of Highland long these themes and take forward specific action to improve the local area.
- 4.3 Some of the priorities focus on Council action and some require engagement with others including lobbying activity.

5 Implications

- 5.1 There are no immediate Legal, Risk or Gaelic implications at this stage. Action to support these priorities will bring positive impacts for the Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) and for the environment (Climate Change / Carbon Clever).
- 5.2 There will be resource impacts including staff time. In 2018 work will be done to understand how best to direct staff time and other resources to support Members' priorities and how to measure progress against them.

Designation: Head of Policy and Reform

Date: 31 January 2018

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Background Papers: Appendix 1 – Badenoch and Strathspey Priorities

LOCAL VOICES | HIGHLAND CHOICES

Draft Ward 20 Badenoch & Strathspey Local Strategic Priorities – February 2018

A place to live

- Create an environment where people can afford to live and work in the Ward
- Review provision of innovative affordable housing solutions and address policy change where required
- Support designation of land exclusively for affordable housing
- Increase the range of affordable rented accommodation utilising Government financial initiatives
- Encourage and review tenant participation
- Work with partners, including NHS Highland and third sector providers, on initiatives to tackle social isolation
- Continue to support development of community resilience initiatives
- Continue to recognise the unique climatic and geographical challenges in the Badenoch & Strathspey Ward and work with communities on environmental issues

A place to learn

- Attract, retain and support suitably qualified and experienced staff for all Ward Schools
- Consider innovative ways of providing educational leadership and management such as 3 – 18 campus concepts
- Develop higher and further education opportunities at Ward level through:
 - Strengthening links to Inverness College / UHI in Ward communities and the Ward High Schools
 - Promoting transport links to facilitate access to Inverness College / UHI and Ward High Schools
 - Creation and development of an 'Academy' system e.g. for the Care and Tourism sectors
- Focus on skills, employability and upskilling relevant to the local employment market
 - Expand involvement of business and trades in skills for work opportunities and develop vocational education and apprenticeships to link with local job opportunities
 - Continue to support the development of Mandarin learning
 - Continue to support digitally rich learning environments
 - Continue to support outdoor learning being at the heart of the curriculum within all Ward Schools
- Strengthen and support local learning opportunities for all ages e.g. with Cairngorms Learning Partnership, Caberfeidh Horizons Employability Project & Project Scotland
- Maximise opportunities created through the new hospital development in Badenoch & Strathspey in areas such as life science, research and training

A place to thrive

- Delivery of high speed broadband utilising innovative IT solutions across the Ward as a key driver for economic growth
- Promote economic regeneration, development and proactive business connections in collaboration with Business Gateway, HIE, CBP, CNPA, UHI
- Work with partners to specifically address:

- Availability of land for development of light industrial units
- The need to progress a programme of developing business starter and development units
- Promote and support delivery of the Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy
- Ensure prosperity is spread across the Ward
 - Economic focus on South Badenoch in partnership with CNPA (South Badenoch identified as a spatial priority area in the CNPA Park Plan)
- Support and develop provision of decentralised Highland Council jobs and opportunities in the Ward
- Develop and promote an integrated transport system for work and leisure across the Ward
- Rail Services - continue to lobby for:
 - Additional rail commuter services
 - Appropriate and discount fares
 - Improved reliable timetables
 - Increase carriage capacity, especially for longer distance journeys – including provision for wheelchairs users, luggage, and bikes
- Bus services
 - Development and security of routes and services
 - Improve condition, accessibility and reliability of all fleet
- Support the Rails to Grantown Project as a means to improve economic activity for the Ward
- Continue to support, and input to, the delivery of the A9 Dualling Project, ensuring effective partnership working throughout with input from local communities
- Support the NHS in successful delivery of a new hospital for Badenoch and Strathspey
- Support successful redesign of services to improve access to NHS Integrated Healthcare that delivers quality health and social care for all residents of Ward 20

A welcoming place

- Ensure that year round tourism is encouraged, developed and supported throughout the Ward
- Deliver a safe, accessible and fully connected off road network linking communities in the Ward
- Support the development of strong and resilient communities throughout the Ward
- Support introduction of 20mph speed limits across ward communities, working with partners to improve road safety on all of our roads

A redesigned council

- Involve communities in local decision making
- Development of an effective Badenoch & Strathspey Community Partnership. Our aim is to achieve integrated service planning with and for the local Community with our partners
- Support community asset transfer to benefit local communities
- Support participatory and local budgeting initiatives to encourage broader community participation