

**The Highland Council  
Sutherland County Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the Sutherland County Committee held in the Chamber, Council Offices, Drummuie on Thursday, 23 August 2018 at 10.30am.

**Present:**

Ms K Currie

Mr H Morrison

Mrs D Mackay

Ms L Munro (Chair)

Mr J McGillivray

**Officials in attendance:**

Mr P Tomalin, Ward Manager, Chief Executive's Office

Ms A Donald, Education Quality Improvement Manager, Care and Learning Service

Mr R Gerring, Transport Planning Manager, Development & Infrastructure Service

Mr M Dent, Access Officer, Development & Infrastructure Service

Ms A Macrae, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

**Also in Attendance:**

Mrs F Hampton, Head of Business, High Life Highland (Item 4)

Ms Y Ross, Youth Worker, Dornoch Academy, High Life Highland (Item 4)

Chief Inspector I MacLelland, North Area Commander, Police Scotland (Items 5&6 )

Detective Chief Inspector Vince McLaughlin, Police Scotland (Items 5 & 6)

**1. Apologies for Absence  
Leisgeulan**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr R Gale.

**2. Declarations of Interest  
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Appointment of Vice Chair of Sutherland County Committee  
Cur Iar-Chathraiche Comataidh Siorrachd Chataibh an Dreuchd**

Mrs D Mackay seconded by Ms K Currie proposed that Mr H Morrison be appointed as Vice Chair of the Committee.

On there being no other nominations, the Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr H Morrison to the position of Vice Chair.

**4. Presentation: Year of Young People High Life Highland  
Taisbeanadh: Bliadhna na h-Òigridh High Life na Gàidhealtachd**

The Head of Business and Youth Worker, High Life Highland were in attendance to give a presentation on the event 'A Great Day Out in Sutherland' which was being held to celebrate the Year of Young People and which had been organised in response to feedback from youngsters in secondary schools in Sutherland. The event would be held at the Ferrycroft Visitor Centre in Lairg on 12 September 2018 and would involve pupils from Golspie High School, Dornoch Academy, Farr High School, Kinlochbervie High School and Ullapool High School. It would be free to

attend and would focus on health and wellbeing and be activity and entertainment based, and information was provided on the more detailed plans and activities for the day. A range of partners were supporting the event and further details were also provided in this regard.

During discussion, Members welcomed the event and commended the High Life Highland representatives, and young people involved for all the work they had invested in driving forward what was an excellent event.

Members then raised the following key issues:-

- the attendance of the Armed Forces was welcomed, however concern was expressed that they should not bring weapons to the event. The Head of Business confirmed that further details of the type of interactions proposed with the young people would be sought with the stipulation that no weapons should be brought to the event;
- clarification was sought and provided on the timeline that would apply in respect any decision to cancel in the event of poor weather conditions;
- it was confirmed that event was open to all secondary school pupils, reference being made to the logistical and safety issues associated with involving primary school pupils;
- the Sutherland Community Partnership also be commended on their involvement in pulling the event together;
- young people from Sutherland attending Tain Royal Academy should also to attend the event if they so wished be considered;
- the potential for recent school leavers to attend also be investigated; and
- it was noted that further more detailed discussions would take place with Members on the planning and logistics of the event at their Ward Business Meeting in September 2018.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the presentation.

## **5. Police – Area Performance Summary** **Poileas – Geàrr-chunntas air Coileanadh Sgìreil**

There had been circulated Report Nos SCC/10/18 and SCC/11/18 dated 8 August 2018 by the North Area Commander.

During discussion, Members raised the following key issues:-

- concern was expressed that a recent Driving Ambitions session at Dornoch Academy had involved only sixth year pupils and therefore the initiative was not capturing all young people as they were learning to drive and the importance of all schools in Sutherland being involved going forward. The Chief Inspector advised that Police Scotland supported the Council in regard to the delivery of Driving Ambitions and he would have further discussions on these issues;
- confirmation was sought and provided by the Chief Inspector that Members would be presented with more information on the work ongoing to update and improve Driving Ambitions through a more coordinated partnership approach;

- further information was sought and provided on the Rider Refinement North scheme in terms of how many people had engaged, how the public could become involved and when it would be repeated;
- an update was sought on progress with the 101 reporting system in response to which the Chief Inspector advised that it was working well with few complaints having been received; and
- further information was sought and provided in relation to Counter Terrorism and Domestic Extremism and in particular the work ongoing to develop contacts in the Sutherland area in order to run workshops for relevant staff. The Chair suggested that ports were a particular issue in Sutherland and Members could assist in identifying contacts within communities. The Chief Inspector welcomed this support and advised that he would provide the Ward Manager with the contact details of the relevant officer within Police Scotland for wider dissemination to Members.

The Committee following scrutiny, **NOTED** progress made against the objectives set within the Highland and Islands Local Policing Plan 2017-20.

#### **6. Presentation: Police Public Protection Unit - Protecting Communities Across Sutherland**

**Taisbeanadh: Aonad Dìon Poblach a' Phoileis – A' Dion Choimhearsnachdan Air Feadh Chataibh**

Detective Chief Inspector V McLaughlin, Police Scotland was in attendance to give a short presentation on the work on going in relation to protecting communities across Sutherland. He reported on the work of the Risk and Concern Hub which covered the Highlands and Islands and its importance in the managing and sharing of information with a range of partners to improve the wellbeing of persons, localities and communities in Highland. In this regard, he provided further information on the Vulnerable Persons Database and initiatives such as the Right to Ask Scheme which was a disclosure scheme for domestic abuse. An update was also provided on the work ongoing to protect people from financial harm through a coordinated approach with partners including with financial institutions to prevent fraud and repeat incidents.

During discussion, Members raised the following key issues:-

- information was sought and provided on the operation of the Right to Ask Scheme during which it was confirmed that the first point of contact would be through the 101 reporting system;
- it was important to note and welcome the significant progress which had been made in supporting families and victims over recent years;
- reference was made to the changing role of the Police officer in terms of protecting vulnerable people and communities, for example dealing with missing persons;
- in regard to the above a point that there was a shortage of mental health officers and other specialist support in respect of substance use and the fact the Police officer was filling that gap and the importance of their being a balance of provision across partners; and
- in response to the Chair, it was confirmed that a copy of the presentation would be circulated to Members.

The Committee **NOTED** the presentation.

**7. Dornoch Associated School Group Overview**  
**Sealladh Coitcheann air Buidheann Sgoiltean Co-cheangailte Dhòrnaich**

There had been Report No SCC/12/18 dated 20 August 2018 by the Director of Care and Learning.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the title of the ASG should be changed to the Dornoch 3-18 Campus Associated School Group Overview. The Education Quality Improvement Manager confirmed she would feedback on this point;
- it was suggested the figures in respect of free meals uptake at Dornoch Academy reflected a level of deprivation which was not always acknowledged in statistics for the locality; and
- concern was expressed at the condition of the school buildings within the ASG and within Sutherland in general. It was suggested that rural areas were not benefitting from the Schools for Future programme and there was a need to focus and lobby on a programme which also invested in the upgrading and refurbishment of existing schools.

The Committee following scrutiny, **NOTED** the content of the report.

**8. Annual Area Capital Report**  
**Cunntas à Ùr mu Chalpa Sgìre**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/13/18 dated 6 August 2018 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services.

In discussion, disappointment was expressed that a representative from the Finance Service had not attended the meeting to present the report and respond to Members questions and therefore allow for proper scrutiny of the report.

Further comments included:-

- the report be welcomed on the basis it represented a starting point for Member scrutiny and the opportunity to influence the capital spend going forward, specific reference being made to the condition of school buildings in the area;;
- the potential to retain the income of £70,000 generated from the sale of a Community Services building in the area for use in Sutherland, for example to offset/cushion against future pending charges in Sutherland such as car parking charges;
- in regard to the above concern was expressed that it was not competent to use capital monies to offset revenue charges;
- concern at the proposed measure to introduce car parking charges in Sutherland given there was no pressure on parking in the area;
- the need for Sutherland to be allocated a proportionate share of the Council's overall total capital spend to ensure fairness on the basis it was suggested that there was under investment in the area;

- it was requested that a league table of the proposed allocation of and actual capital spend across each area in the Highlands be produced. It was confirmed that an Annual Area Capital report was being presented to each of the Local Committees and therefore this information was already available.

Following further discussion, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the expenditure on each project in this Council area in 2017/18;
- ii. **NOTED** that budget for each project in this Council area in 2018/19;
- iii. **AGREED** to request that an officer be invited to a Ward Business Meeting to speak to the report; and
- \* iv. **AGREED** to request that the income of £70,000 generated from the sale of a Community Services building in Dornoch be ring fenced for use in Sutherland.

## 9. Dornoch Aerodrome Raon-adhair Dhòrnaich

There had been circulated Report No SCC/14/18 dated 25 July 2018 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure.

In discussion, Members welcomed the report as an excellent piece of work and advised it would be helpful if progress could be reviewed after a period of one year. The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of this report;
- ii. **NOTED** the proposed changes to signs at the airstrip, and efforts to be made to promote the boundary walking route(s);
- iii. **AGREED** to delegate the Director of Development and Infrastructure to negotiate on behalf of the Council and conclude an agreement with the RAF;
- iv. **APPROVED** the Rules for Users (**Appendix 6**); and
- v. **APPROVED** the Schedule of Fees (**Appendix 7**).

## 10. Sutherland Local Access Forum - Appointments Fòram Intriagadh Ionadail Chataibh – Cur an Dreuchd

There had been circulated Report No SCC/15/18 dated 31 July 2018 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure.

In discussion, it was queried whether there were vacancies for community representatives on the Forum, interest having been expressed from representatives of Dornoch and Edderton Community Councils. The Access Officer advised that there were currently no community representatives on the Forum and as such there was the opportunity for additional appointments. He confirmed that any further appointments would be submitted to the Committee for approval.

A point was also raised on the need to raise awareness of the work of the Forum and the opportunity to discuss this matter in more detail at a future date.

The Committee **APPROVED** the appointment of those members of the public (as set out in **Appendix 2**) that have applied to be new members of the Local Access Forum in Sutherland.

#### **11. Sutherland County Committee – Area Priorities Comataidh Siorrachd Chataibh – Prìomhachasan Sgìreil**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/16/18 dated 3 August 2018 by the Head of Policy and Reform.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the development of an action plan which identified timelines and lead officers in relation to priorities be considered at the next Ward Business Meeting;
- the Chair confirmed she would follow up in relation to Members concerns in regard to the Highland Third Sector Interface's decision to reduce its funding to VGES and CVS North;
- in terms of budgeting decisions it was critical to move forward with community engagement at the earliest opportunity and it was suggested that feedback be sought on the next steps during the series of meetings to be held between Members, community councils and the public in September 2018; and
- clarification was sought on the closing dates for the next round of funding from the Scottish Government's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund. The Ward Manager confirmed he would circulate Members with the relevant information.

The Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** "A Voice for Sutherland and its People", the local strategic priorities for Sutherland, including the stated priorities for the next 12 months;
- ii. **AGREED** to promote these with the wider Council membership and as part of the Council's Programme 2017-22;
- iii. **NOTED** that there will be opportunity, through the Sutherland Community Partnership and engagement with partner agencies, community bodies and communities to consider wider shared priorities over the Council's term; and
- iv. **NOTED** that further work will be done to identify how the local priorities agreed can be supported by staff and any other Council resources. This will include considering how to best measure progress. Some priorities are already well aligned to the Council's Programme.

#### **12. Centenary Fields – Bonar Bridge War Memorial Gardens Raointean Cuimhneachan nan Ceud Bliadhna – Gàrraidhean Cuimhneachan Cogaidh Dhrochaid a' Bhanna**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/17/18 dated 25 July 2018 by the Director of Community Services.

In discussion, the Ward Manager clarified that the Creich and Kincardine Branch of the Royal British Legion and Creich Community Council would be consulted as part of the application process.

- \* The Committee **AGREED** to recommend that the Bonar Bridge War Memorial Gardens be nominated for Centenary Field status.

**13. Dornoch Common Good Quarterly Monitoring Report  
Aithisg Sgrùdadh Ràitheil Math Coitcheann Dhòrnaich**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/18/18 dated 25 July 2018 by the Depute Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Development.

The Committee **NOTED** the position of the Dornoch Common Good Fund, as shown in the Q1 monitoring statement against budget.

**14. Minutes  
Geàrr-chunntas**

There were circulated and **NOTED** Minutes of the Sutherland County Committee held on 23 May 2018, which had been approved by the Council on 28 June 2018.

**15. Exclusion of the Public  
Às-dùnadh a' Phobail**

The Committee **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

**16. Dornoch Common Good – Dornoch Firth Netting Rights  
Math Coitcheann Dhòrnaich – Còraichean Iasgach-lìon Caolas Dhòrnaich**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/19/18 dated 31 July 2018 by the Head of Policy and Reform.

The Committee **APPROVED** the recommendation set out in the report.

The meeting closed at 12.50pm.

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