

**The Highland Council
No. 10 2019/2020**

Minutes of Special Meeting of the Highland Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday, 5 March 2020 at 10.30am.

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

Present:

Mr G Adam

Mr B Allan

Mr R Balfour

Mrs J Barclay

Mr A Baxter

Mr B Boyd

Mr R Bremner (v/c)

Mr I Brown

Mr J Bruce

Mrs C Caddick

Miss J Campbell

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair

Mrs H Carmichael

Mr A Christie

Mr G Cruickshank

Dr I Cockburn

Mrs M Cockburn

Ms K Currie

Mrs M Davidson

Mr J Finlayson

Mr M Finlayson

Mr C Fraser

Mr L Fraser

Mr R Gale

Mr J Gordon

Mr K Gowans

Mr A Graham

Mr J Gray

Mr T Heggie

Mr A Henderson

Mr A Jarvie

Ms E Knox

Mr B Lobban

Mr D Louden

Mr A MacInnes

Mrs D Mackay

Mr D Mackay

Mr W MacKay (v/c)

Mr G MacKenzie

Mr S Mackie

Mr A Mackinnon

Mrs A MacLean

Mr D MacLeod

Mr D Macpherson

Mr R MacWilliam

Mrs B McAllister

Mr J McGillivray (v/c)

Mr N McLean (v/c)

Mr H Morrison

Ms L Munro

Mrs P Munro

Mrs M Paterson

Mr I Ramon

Mr M Reiss

Mr A Rhind

Mr D Rixson

Mrs F Robertson

Mrs T Robertson

Ms E Roddick

Mr K Rosie (v/c)

Mr G Ross

Mr P Saggars

Mr A Sinclair

Ms N Sinclair (v/c)

Ms M Smith

Mr B Thompson

Mrs C Wilson

In Attendance

Chief Executive

Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure
& Environment

Executive Chief Officer, Communities &
Place

Executive Chief Officer, Performance
& Governance

Executive Chief Officer, Education &
Learning

Executive Chief Officer, Property &
Housing

Executive Chief Officer, Health & Social
Care

Executive Chief Officer, Resources &
Finance

Mr B Lobban in the Chair

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs I Campbell, Ms P Hadley, Mrs L MacDonald, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr C MacLeod and Mr C Smith.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

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

Item 3 – Non-Financial – Mr A Jarvie, Ms L Munro, Mr A Christie, Mr T Heggie, Mrs M Paterson, Mr D Macpherson, Miss J Campbell and Mr D Louden

Item 3 – Financial – Mr A Christie, Mrs D MacKay and Mr K Gowans

3. Revenue Budget 2020/21 to 2022/23 Buidseat Teachd-a-steach agus Cìs Comhairle 2020/21-2022/23

Declarations of Interest – Non-Financial

Mr A Jarvie (Director of High Life Highland and member of the Inverness & Nairn Access Forum), Ms L Munro (Director of High Life Highland), Mr A Christie (Director of Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureaux), Mr T Heggie (Director of High Life Highland), Mrs M Paterson (Member of Eden Court Board), Mr D Macpherson (Director of High Life Highland), Miss J Campbell (Member of Eden Court Board) and Mr D Louden (Director of Home Start, East Highland) 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 their involvement in the discussion and voting.

Declarations of Interest – Financial

Mr A Christie and Mrs D MacKay (Non-Executive Directors of NHS Highland) declared financial interests in this item but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, confirmed that they would remain in the meeting.

Mr K Gowans (family member employed by High Life Highland) declared a financial interest and confirmed that he would leave the meeting if there was any specific discussion on High Life Highland.

There had been circulated Report No. HC/2/20 dated 25 February 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Finance and Resources.

In this regard, and during a summary of the report, information was provided in relation to the Scottish Government funding settlement and proposed action to close the budget gap and meet future budget challenges in line with the Council themes of Making the Council More Efficient, Commercialisation and Income Generation, Redesign and Improvement and Flexible and Well Managed Workforce.

Specific and detailed information was also provided in relation to the different approach to the budget process which had now been adopted in line with the Change and Improvement Strategy for 2020-2022 'A Sustainable Highland' which had been circulated as Appendix 1 to the report.

Thereafter, the Budget Leader, in moving the recommendations within the report, thanked Members and Officers across the Council for the considerable level of work which had been undertaken during the budget process at a time of great financial challenge and uncertainty at a local and national level. In this respect, thanks were also

conveyed to the Trade Unions for their input as part of this process which had led to a balanced budget for the Council.

In line with the Best Value Audit Report, improvements had now been put in place to ensure that the Council was on the road to recovery and this included the rebuilding reserves. As such, it was stressed that it was imperative that all resources were used efficiently and effectively and at this point it was confirmed that increased investment in the road network across the Highlands was being given high priority.

The Leader of the Council, in stressing the need for the increased investment in Highland roads, also pointed out the need for both judgement and compromise from all Members in relation to the proposed budget recommendations and whilst expressing her thanks to the Scottish Government for the increased revenue funding, highlighted that there would still be difficult decisions ahead and this would include the Capital Programme. As such, there had to be a focus on local communities and what they needed as the wellbeing of such communities across the Highlands had to be paramount in all future decisions. Reducing the carbon footprint of the Council in the weeks and months ahead also had to be the subject of detailed considerations.

The Depute Leader of the Council also thanked Members for their input to the budget process and confirmed that the Change Fund in particular would be a key part of delivering future services across the Council area. As such, consideration would be given to ways in which communities could be empowered to help to deliver such services and this would be taken forward by the Chief Executive and the new Executive Chief Officers in due course.

The Depute Leader of the Opposition highlighted a number of proposed amendments from the SNP Group at this point in the meeting, which included a focus on Environment Access Works, Land Management, Bus Shelter Cleaning, the Education DSM budget, Rural Transport, the Social Care Service Workers Education Scheme, ASN Education, a Poverty Strategy, development of a Skills for Work Charter and establishment of a Sub Committee of the Corporate Resources Committee on a cross-party basis in order for Members to be able to monitor budgets more fully throughout the year in future with the aid and addition of new computer software, and it was confirmed that a recess period would be arranged after the general discussion had concluded in order that detailed discussion could be undertaken with the Administration on these proposed amendments.

The Leader of the Scottish Conservative & Unionist Group also highlighted a number of detailed amendments from his Group, which included a transfer of funds from the additional Scottish Government money which had been announced after the budget had been published, a reduction in the Council Tax rise by 1.84% to 3% (with the roads investment programme continuing as proposed), removal of the fuel price increase as a cost pressure, an increase in Additional Voluntary Contributions to reduce National Insurance and Tax liabilities, setting the Change Fund as a recurring rollover budget of £2.25m, maintain the land management and access team budgets, continuing to meet leave payment in lieu of leave centrally, no increase to burial or cremation fees, 100% relief on fish export licences for one year, avoiding bus shelter cleaning contract cancellation, maintaining Ward Discretionary budgets at current levels and provision of a one-off payment of £400 to Community Councils to ease future budgeting.

During general discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- it was noted that in future the budget would be presented in line with the new service areas led by the Executive Chief Officers and that a further report in this regard was to be submitted to the Corporate Resources Committee in due course;

- in relation to Early Years, and specifically re-basing Early Years and Associated Service Budgets, it was confirmed that it was expected that a review of the whole service would impact positively on the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of high quality early learning and childcare and that any staffing issues would be managed in accordance with all HR Council policies;
- more specific detail in percentage terms should be provided on how the Council budget would be spent, specifically in relation to expenditure on roads;
- there had been a previous commitment to the establishment of a cross-party Working Group and a budget of £100k for play parks and it was hoped that this could now be included within the recommendations;
- there had to be robust and effective project management in place in order to ensure delivery of the budget savings which were being proposed;
- it had been stated throughout the report that the Council should 'consider' the rural impact of budget proposals but it was suggested that this terminology should be strengthened as a detailed focus on proposals was essential;
- in relation to the review of Education budgets, and specifically the Devolved Schools Management budget, there was concern at the proposal to remove the automatic funding of Pay in Lieu in terms of the potential impact on individual schools and it was suggested that this should be reversed if it had already been implemented;
- the work which had been undertaken on the ASN engagement process was welcomed and it was essential to now rebuild confidence in order to move forward with future consultations in this regard;
- it would be helpful for Members to be able to more easily identify both overspends and underspends in individual service budgets throughout the year;
- it was suggested that Ward Discretionary Budgets and Community Council grants were of particular significance in terms of how the Council interacted with communities across the Highlands;
- there was a need for more detailed consideration of the budget in relation to the hire of vehicles in future;
- there was concern in relation to budget savings which had been identified in previous years but which had still not been delivered. In this regard, particular reference was made to the November meeting of the Harbour Management Board in that the introduction of invoice surcharges and late payment penalties (which had previously been agreed by the Council) had still not yet been implemented. It was therefore the case that a situation now existed whereby parents were currently being penalised for school meal payments which had gone into a deficit position but the same stipulations were not being applied to companies;
- there was a need for the Council to be updated on what realistic income/return on investment was expected in relation to car parking charges across the Highland area;
- it was felt by some Members that they had not been as engaged in this budget process as they had been in previous years and it was hoped that this could be remedied in the coming year;
- the involvement of the Redesign Board should be considered as part of the focus/discussion on the future Roads budget and in assessing savings on the white fleet;
- there was concern about the continual increase in burial and cremation fees, particularly in terms of the extreme difficulties which this posed for those people on low incomes, and it was suggested that there should be a review of this issue with a view to actually reducing these fees in future if possible; and
- there were reservations about the effect of a 4.84% increase in Council Tax for Highland residents and specifically those on low incomes.

At this point, the Council agreed to a short recess in order to consider in detail the amendments which had been proposed.

Thereafter, it was confirmed that the amendments from the SNP Group in relation to the following had now been accepted and formed part of a revised Motion from the Administration which was tabled at the meeting:-

- (i) establishment of a Change Fund in the revised sum of £2.260m;
- (ii) the savings figure for Procurement (Appendix 3 – Ref:3.12) to be amended to £0.227m;
- (iii) removal of the proposed savings for Environment – Access Works (£0.030m) and also Land Management (£0.075m);
- (iv) the savings figure for Community Services (Service Wide) – Review of several Contracts and Services - to be reduced by £0.022m to reflect the removal of the bus shelter cleaning saving;
- (v) the savings figure for the review of Education budgets and DSM to be reduced by £0.240m to reflect the removal of the saving element associated with pay in lieu of holidays;
- (vi) appropriate financial security software to be purchased with immediate effect to allow Members to effectively monitor ongoing Council service budgets;
- (vii) establishment of a cross-party Sub Committee of the Corporate Resources Committee to continually discuss budget savings/proposals for each coming year and commencing in April 2020 – this Sub Committee to meet monthly and more often as appropriate near the financial year end;
- (viii) the creation of earmarked funds of £0.500m for rural transport projects, £1.000m for ‘A Highland Deal for a Sustainable Future’ and £0.100m for play parks from the additional funding received from the Scottish Government;
- (ix) any recommendations from the May 2020 ASN report to be met in full from monies banked in reserves if required; and
- (x) the new Joint Wellbeing Sub Committee to develop an Anti-Poverty Strategy and report this to the Council for approval.

The remaining amendments were then dealt with as follows:-

Mr A MacKinnon, seconded by Mr J Gray, **MOVED** the terms of the revised Motion which had been tabled at the meeting.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr A Jarvie, seconded by Mr S Mackie, moved that, in line with the Scottish Conservative Group budget proposals, part of the transfer of funds from the additional Scottish Government money announced after the Council had been published in the sum of £2.3m (which had been listed as a realisable saving) should be used to reduce the proposed Council Tax rise by 1.84% to 3%, with the roads investment programme continuing as proposed.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 57 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 9 votes, with 1 abstention, and the **MOTION** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr G Adam, Mr B Allan, Mr R Balfour, Mrs J Barclay, Mr A Baxter, Mr B Boyd, Mr R Bremner, Mr I Brown, Mrs C Caddick, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Mrs M Cockburn, Dr I Cockburn, Ms K Currie, Mrs M Davidson, Mr J Finlayson, Mr M Finlayson, Mr L Fraser, Mr C Fraser, Mr R Gale, Mr J Gordon, Mr K Gowans, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mr T Heggie, Mr A Henderson, Ms E Knox, Mr B Lobban, Mr D Loudon, Mr A MacInnes, Mrs D Mackay, Mr W MacKay, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr A Mackinnon, Mrs A MacLean, Mr D Macpherson, Mr R MacWilliam, Mrs B McAllister, Mr J

McGillivray, Mr N McLean, Mr H Morrison, Ms P Munro, Ms L Munro, Mrs M Paterson, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mr D Rixson, Mrs T Robertson, Mrs F Robertson, Ms E Roddick, Mr K Rosie, Mr G Ross, Ms N Sinclair, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson and Ms C Wilson.

For the Amendment:

Mr J Bruce, Miss J Campbell, Mr A Jarvie, Mr D Mackay, Mr S Mackie, Mr D MacLeod, Mr I Ramon, Mr P Sagers and Mr A Sinclair.

Abstentions:

Mr G Cruickshank

Thereafter, Mr A MacKinnon, seconded by Mr J Gray, **MOVED** the terms of the revised Motion which had been tabled at the meeting.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr S Mackie, seconded by Mr P Sagers, moved that, in line with the Scottish Conservative Group budget proposals, removal of the fuel price increase as a cost pressure due to the decrease in fuel prices and making under-used electric cars easier to book in the sum of £0.181m (which had been listed as a realisable saving) should be used to put a freeze on any increase in burial and cremation fees and also to provide 100% relief on fish export licences for one year to support the industry through loss of business from the coronavirus impact.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 54 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 10 votes, with 3 abstentions, and the **MOTION** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr G Adam, Mr B Allan, Mr R Balfour, Mrs J Barclay, Mr B Boyd, Mr R Bremner, Mr I Brown, Mrs C Caddick, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Mrs M Cockburn, Dr I Cockburn, Ms K Currie, Mrs M Davidson, Mr J Finlayson, Mr M Finlayson, Mr C Fraser, Mr R Gale, Mr J Gordon, Mr K Gowans, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mr T Heggie, Mr A Henderson, Ms E Knox, Mr B Lobban, Mr D Louden, Mr A MacInnes, Mrs D Mackay, Mr W MacKay, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr A Mackinnon, Mrs A MacLean, Mr D Macpherson, Mr R MacWilliam, Mrs B McAllister, Mr N McLean, Mr H Morrison, Ms P Munro, Ms L Munro, Mrs M Paterson, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mr D Rixson, Mrs T Robertson, Mrs F Robertson, Ms E Roddick, Mr K Rosie, Mr G Ross, Ms N Sinclair, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson and Ms C Wilson.

For the Amendment:

Mr A Baxter, Mr J Bruce, Mr G Cruickshank, Mr A Jarvie, Mr D Mackay, Mr S Mackie, Mr D MacLeod, Mr I Ramon, Mr P Sagers and Mr A Sinclair.

Abstentions:

Miss J Campbell, Mr L Fraser and Mr J McGillivray.

Thereafter, Mr A Mackinnon, seconded by Mr J Gray, **MOVED** the terms of the revised Motion which had been tabled at the meeting.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr S Mackie, seconded by Mr A Jarvie, moved that, in line with the Scottish Conservative Group budget proposals, £0.269m from setting the Change Fund as a recurring rollover budget of £2.25m based on past performance and capacity to deliver (which had been listed a realisable saving) should be used to maintain Ward Discretionary Budgets at levels agreed at the 2019/20 budget and also to provide a one-off payment of £400 to Community Councils to ease future budgeting.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 54 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 11 votes, with 2 abstentions, and the **MOTION** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr G Adam, Mr B Allan, Mr R Balfour, Mrs J Barclay, Mr B Boyd, Mr R Bremner, Mr I Brown, Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Mrs M Cockburn, Dr I Cockburn, Ms K Currie, Mrs M Davidson, Mr J Finlayson, Mr M Finlayson, Mr L Fraser, Mr C Fraser, Mr R Gale, Mr J Gordon, Mr K Gowans, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mr T Heggie, Mr A Henderson, Ms E Knox, Mr B Lobban, Mr A MacInnes, Mrs D Mackay, Mr W MacKay, Mr G MacKenzie, Mr A Mackinnon, Mrs A MacLean, Mr D Macpherson, Mr R MacWilliam, Mrs B McAllister, Mr N McLean, Mr H Morrison, Ms P Munro, Ms L Munro, Mrs M Paterson, Mr M Reiss, Mr A Rhind, Mr D Rixson, Mrs T Robertson, Mrs F Robertson, Ms E Roddick, Mr K Rosie, Mr G Ross, Ms N Sinclair, Ms M Smith, Mr B Thompson and Ms C Wilson.

For the Amendment:

Mr A Baxter, Mr J Bruce, Mr G Cruickshank, Mr A Jarvie, Mr D Mackay, Mr S Mackie, Mr D MacLeod, Mr J McGillivray, Mr I Ramon, Mr P Sagggers and Mr A Sinclair.

Abstentions:

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair and Mr D Loudon.

Decision

The Council:-

- (i) **AGREED** a 3% increase in Council Tax in order to close the Council's budget gap for 2020/21;
- (ii) **AGREED** a further 1.84% increase in Council Tax to enable a £20,000,000 investment programme in the Council's roads infrastructure as detailed in Appendix 6;
- (iii) As a consequence of recommendations i) and ii) **AGREED** that Council Tax rates for 2020/21 would increase by 4.84% as reflected in Appendix 7;
- (iv) **APPROVED** the funding of the budget pressures as summarised in Sections 5 and 6 of the report and detailed in Appendix 2;
- (v) **APPROVED** the planned £2m annual rebuilding of reserves as outlined in Section 7;
- (vi) **APPROVED** the establishment of a Change Fund of £2.260m;
- (vii) **APPROVED** the re-phased delivery profile of savings agreed in February 2019 as detailed in Appendix 3 with the exception that saving 3.12 was increased to £0.227m in 2020/21;
- (viii) **APPROVED** the package of new savings proposals covering the period 2020/21 to 2022/23 as summarised in Section 16 and in the Change and Improvement Strategy 'A Sustainable Highland' at Appendix 1, except with savings 1.5 and 1.9 removed, saving 1.11 reduced by £0.022m to reflect the removal of the bus shelter cleaning saving, and saving 3.11 reduced by £0.240m to reflect the removal of the saving element associated with pay in lieu of holidays;
- (ix) **AGREED** that the impact of any changes in Government funding that might come as part of a final budget settlement be considered as part of the ongoing development of the Medium-Term Financial Plan over the coming months;
- (x) **AGREED** that appropriate 'financial scrutiny' software be purchased with immediate effect (at the very latest end April 2020) to enable Members to effectively monitor ongoing Council service budgets;
- (xi) **AGREED** to the establishment of a Sub Committee of the Corporate Resources Committee to continually discuss the Highland Council budget savings/proposals for each coming year, commencing April 2020. The new Sub Committee to be cross

party and to meet at least monthly and more often as appropriate near the financial year end;

- (xii) **AGREED** to the creation of an earmarked fund of £0.500m for rural transport projects to be funded by the additional funding received from the Scottish Government;
- (xiii) **AGREED** to the creation of an earmarked fund of £1.000m for 'A Highland Deal for a Sustainable Future' to be funded by the additional funding received from the Scottish Government;
- (xiv) **AGREED** to the creation of an earmarked fund of £0.100m for play parks to be funded by the additional funding received from the Scottish Government;
- (xv) **AGREED** that any recommendations from the May 2020 ASN report be met in full from monies banked in reserves if required; and
- (xvi) **AGREED** that the new Joint Wellbeing Sub Committee be remitted to develop an anti-poverty strategy and to report this to the Council for approval.

The meeting ended at 2.25pm.

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Education Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 27 February 2020 at 12.05 pm.

Present:

Mrs C Caddick (Substitute)	Mr G MacKenzie
Mrs I Campbell	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mrs M Cockburn	Mr S Mackie
Mr J Finlayson (Chair)	Mr R MacWilliam
Mr L Fraser	Ms L Munro (Substitute) (Skype)
Mr K Gowans	Mrs F Robertson
Mr A Graham	Mr G Ross
Mr T Heggie (Vice Chair)	Mr A Sinclair
Ms E Knox	Ms N Sinclair (video conferencing)

Religious Representatives:

Ms S Lamont
Mr W Skene

Non-Members also present:

Mr R Balfour	Mr B Lobban
Mr R Bremner (video conferencing)	Mr D Mackay
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair	Mrs A MacLean
Mrs M Davidson	Mr D Macpherson
Mr R Gale (video conferencing)	Mr J McGillivray (video conferencing)
Mr A Henderson	Mr C Smith
Mr A Jarvie	

In attendance:

Ms D Manson, Chief Executive
Ms K Lackie, Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance
Mr A Gunn, Interim Chief Officer Resources and Transformation
Mr B Porter, Head of Resources
Ms N Grant, Interim Head of Education
Ms K Henry, Senior Manager Early Years
Ms B Brown, Strategic Quality Improvement Manager
Mr N Engstrand, Change Team representative
Ms C McGonigal, Change Team representative
Ms J MacDonald, Change Team representative
Ms F Shearer, Area Care and Learning Manager (South)
Ms L Bailey, Project Manager, ASN Transformation Project
Mr M Mitchell, Finance Manager
Ms R Bell, Policy Officer
Ms J Douglas, Care and Learning Alliance (Third Sector)
Ms G Newman, Highland Children's Forum (Third Sector)
Ms S Blyth, Highland Parent Council Partnership
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

Also in attendance:

Ms K Cormack, Head Teacher, Dingwall Academy
 Mrs S Lundberg, Dingwall Academy
 Mrs M Kinsman, Dingwall Academy
 Dingwall Academy Signing Choir

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.

Mr J Finlayson in the Chair

Preliminaries

Prior to the commencement of formal business, the Chair highlighted that young people from Inverness Royal Academy were hosting a stand in the Members' Lounge to raise awareness of LGBT History Month and speak to Members about some of the work carried out by the LGBT and Global Citizenship groups in their school. It was added that in 2019 Highland had reached the top ten of the Stonewall Education Index as one of the best local authorities for tackling anti-LGBT bullying and celebrating differences in its schools.

In addition, he provided an update regarding Park Primary School in Invergordon, which had suffered extensive fire damage earlier in the week, and thanked school staff for the safe evacuation of children from the building once the alarm had been raised. Since the fire, the main focus of parents, the wider community and the Council had been to support the whole school community. The Chief Executive had visited the site after the fire and had hosted a parents' meeting, attended by over 200 parents, at Invergordon Academy on Tuesday evening. Plans for both the short and longer term were being looked into but at present the main actions were:

- all P1-7 pupils would be accommodated at Invergordon Academy;
- nursery children would be accommodated at South Lodge Primary School;
- the above arrangements would be in place until Easter;
- High Life Highland was coordinating offers of donations for children and families, and donations should be taken to Invergordon Leisure Centre;
- the Council was making cash payments of £100 to parents to help with replacing coats, bags, shoes etc;
- additional staff and support were being put in place to make the next week or so a positive experience for pupils and staff; and
- arrangements for separate access, dining, play space etc were all in hand.

Any further information would be shared as it became known.

The Chair also drew attention to a list, which had been tabled, of outstanding achievements by pupils and schools. He explained that he was keen to see the good work of young people in Highland recognised at all Committees, and that this would be a standing item on future agendas.

The Committee **NOTED** the updates and the list of outstanding achievements.

Business

In terms of Standing Order 9, the Committee **AGREED** to take item 6 as the first item of business.

6. Dingwall Academy – Highland Deaf Education Acadamaidh Inbhir Pheofharain – Foghlam Buidhre na Gàidhealtachd

Ms K Cormack, Head Teacher, Dingwall Academy, provided a verbal presentation during which it was explained that Dingwall Academy was recognised as one of the leading schools in terms of deaf education provision. It had recently become the base for Highland Deaf Services, headed up by Mrs S Lundberg. In addition, there was specialist provision in the school for deaf education, and Mrs M Kinsman was a valued member of staff within that service.

Deaf education was integrated within the school and enriched it as a result. Every S1 pupil experienced a taster programme in British Sign Language (BSL) and pupils were able to choose it as a subject in future years. BSL was recognised as a language in its own right and, when looking at the numbers for uptake of languages in the school, Gaelic and BSL were the highest. BSL lessons were immediately active and pupils enjoyed learning it. Lobbying had taken place for BSL to be recognised as a qualification and from next year it would be offered at level 5. BSL was also offered to staff, and every department had a member of staff who had taken part in an introductory course.

Mrs Lundberg had been involved in the 1+2 Languages initiative and had developed a programme of work that had been taken up by 39 primary schools and 19 secondary schools in Highland in its first year. In addition, it had been purchased by 13 local authorities across Scotland for use in their schools.

The Signing Choir was very much part of the school and included both deaf and hearing pupils. It was open to everyone, whether studying BSL or not. Ms Cormack then handed over to Mrs Lundberg who provided further information on BSL, explaining that it was based on context rather than vocabulary, and introduced a performance by the Signing Choir of George Ezra's "Shotgun".

During discussion, Members commended the Signing Choir for their performance and wished them every success in the future. It was commented that BSL was integrated into the whole approach of inclusion within the school and featured in all Dingwall Academy functions. The Signing Choir was a current example of the outstanding achievement that had been in place in Dingwall Academy for many years, and special thanks were expressed to Mrs Lundberg and Mrs Kinsman for their efforts. When Education Scotland or the Scottish Government were looking for guidance on BSL matters, Dingwall Academy was at the top of the list. In terms of SQAs, Members welcomed the fact that lobbying had come to fruition and Dingwall Academy would be able to offer BSL at level 5 next year. It would be the first school to do so, just as it had been the first school to include BSL in the curriculum as a modern language.

The Committee otherwise **NOTED** the presentation.

**1. Apologies for Absence
Leisgeulan**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr G Adam, Mr A Christie and The Very Rev S Murray.

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

The Committee **NOTED** the following declarations of interest:-

Item 8 – Mr K Gowans, Mr A Jarvie and Ms E Knox (all non-financial)

Item 12 – Mr A Graham (financial)

**3. Role and Remit of the Education Committee
Dreuchd agus Raon-ùghdarras Comataidh an Fhoghlaim**

There had been circulated Report No EDU/01/20 dated 17 February 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance.

During discussion, Members commented that the school estate capital programme was not included in the functions of the Committee as set out in the report, and it was suggested this be addressed as it was something the Committee should have oversight of.

In response, the Executive Chief Officer Performance and Governance explained that a corporate landlord model had been implemented whereby all the Council's assets were looked at together. In terms of scrutiny, the intention was that this would take place at the Housing and Property Committee as well as at Area Committees. Likewise, the capital programme was a matter for the full Council so all Members would have the opportunity for input. However, she acknowledged Members' comments and it was confirmed that they would be considered as part of the ongoing Governance Review.

Members were encouraged by the response, and it was hoped that a mechanism could be put in place to allow Education Committee input to the capital programme. The school estate could not be ignored when looking at education in general, and the importance of including the Education Committee was reiterated. It was added that the capital programme was not just about buildings; the purpose was to provide buildings which were then used as schools to educate Highland's young people, and that linked it to the Education Committee.

The Committee otherwise **NOTED** the report.

**4. Membership of Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers
Ballrachd Comataidh Barganachaidh Ionadail airson Thidsearan**

The Committee **APPROVED** the membership of the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers as follows:-

- * Chair of the Corporate Resources Committee (recommendation to full Council)
- Vice Chair of the Corporate Resources Committee (recommendation to full Council)

Chair of the Education Committee
 Vice Chair of the Education Committee
 Mr A Christie
 Mrs M Cockburn
 Ms E Knox
 Mr G MacKenzie
 Mr S Mackie
 Mr A Sinclair

**5. Appointment to SEEMiS LLP Board
 Cur an Dreuchd gu Bòrd SEEMisS LLP**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr T Heggie to the SEEMiS LLP Board.

**7. Analysis of Secondary School Interim Attainment
 Mion-sgrùdadh de Bhuileachadh Eadar-amail Àrd-sgoile**

There had been circulated Report No EDU/02/20 dated 18 February 2020 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- reducing bureaucracy in schools would enable teachers to teach, enhance learning and improve attainment overall, leading to better outcomes in the future. It would also reduce stress amongst teaching staff, and it was necessary to work smarter and make better use of technology. In response, the Chair confirmed that tackling bureaucracy in schools was being looked at nationally as well as locally;
- the pre-Committee workshop had been very helpful, and it was suggested they should take place more regularly;
- disappointment was expressed that there was no mention in the report of secondary schools in the Inverness city area, Millburn Academy being a potential model of good practice that could be rolled out across Highland;
- the need to share best practice and improve communication between schools was emphasised;
- it was important, when trying to close the attainment gap, not to lose sight of the high achievers;
- Curriculum for Excellence had led to a deterioration in the choice of subjects being offered in Highland schools, and it was not helpful that some regions could offer certain subjects and others could not;
- it was necessary to seek more help and support in terms of bringing in better practice in Highland;
- reference was made to the variances in practice in primary schools, and it was suggested that there was a need for a blueprint. In response, the Chair emphasised that there was a national curriculum, Curriculum for Excellence, and there were very clear guidelines in that respect. However, it was also necessary to take into account the different context of different schools;
- the data in the report was somewhat confusing and it would have been helpful to have more time to talk it through at the pre-Committee workshop;
- primary attainment was a priority in terms of ensuring that extra pressure was not placed on secondary schools due to pupils not having the necessary skillsets;
- as well as being ambitious for Highland's young people, it was necessary to be ambitious for teachers as they were central to improving attainment;

- it would be helpful to receive feedback at ward level on the Associated School Group (ASG) attainment sessions. In response, the Chair explained that it was intended to create a toolkit and provide feedback at Area Committees to allow local scrutiny of performance;
- the language and aspirations were the same as in previous initiatives, and it was necessary to ask why it was going to be different this time. However, Members recognised the passion of the officers involved and wished them every success;
- it had been understood that Grade A Higher passes were increasing in Highland, and information had been sought from the Strategic Quality Improvement Manager in that regard;
- Curriculum for Excellence had presented huge opportunities to personalise the curriculum for people who otherwise might not have attended school at all;
- the previous Care, Learning and Housing Committee did not place enough emphasis on educational items, and the introduction of a dedicated Education Committee was welcomed. It would provide an opportunity for Member scrutiny that had been lacking in recent times, it was important to take that opportunity;
- Alness Academy had been used as an example for the purposes of the report, but it would be helpful to provide Members with the same information for the secondary schools in their wards to allow them to begin to carry out their scrutiny role;
- in response to the points raised regarding scrutiny, the Chair commented that there needed to be an acceptance that all Members had a responsibility in that respect, and he welcomed the fact that there were CPD opportunities and seminars planned to upskill Members;
- it was requested that ASG leads attend Ward Business Meeting within the next month or two to talk to the attainment data, particularly for the benefit of non-Committee Members who also needed to understand how they could use it to provide scrutiny;
- being in the fourth quartile in terms of performance was unacceptable and it was necessary to take responsibility and move forward in a way that was going to improve the situation as quickly as possible;
- reporting mechanisms needed to improve dramatically and immediately, and information was sought on how it was intended to manage data flow after the follow-up report to the May Committee, including how regularly information would be provided and how flexible the new system would be in terms of responding to what the data showed;
- identifying trends at an early stage would allow solutions to be found and resources to be targeted at problem areas;
- some Members still felt unclear as to how they could contribute to improving the attainment rate;
- it was necessary not only to share information but to develop relationships, and Members and officers needed to work together as colleagues. That had very much been the theme at the pre-Committee workshop, which was encouraging, but it was important to put it into practice;
- to improve tariff scores, it was necessary 1) to improve the quality of education provision; and 2) to offer a wider choice of subjects, particularly at Higher level. When it came to UCAS tariff points, Highland children were between 80 to 100 points below those from comparable Councils that offered a wider choice of subjects, thereby placing them at a disadvantage;
- attention was drawn to the Attainment versus Deprivation charts in the report, and concern was expressed that, in pursuit of closing the attainment gap, the

attainment of higher performing pupils was being lowered. It had previously been reported that Highland had more equal outcomes than other authorities. However, the performance of children from both deprived and privileged backgrounds was below national levels and it was necessary to raise the performance of all pupils;

- it was necessary to have a clear plan and focus, empower teachers, and impress parents and carers with the improvements they saw in their children;
- children developed at different stages in their school life, and they grew in knowledge, skills and confidence throughout the school year because of the teachers, classroom assistants and everyone else that supported them in within school; and
- getting the best for Highland's children should be the Council's number one priority.

In responding to the points raised, the Interim Head of Education confirmed that arrangements would be made for Education Improvement Team representatives to visit Ward Business Meetings and/or Area Committees. In addition, she undertook to prepare, in consultation with the Chair, a Committee Work Plan around attainment and the four key priorities that had been identified at the workshop, and she sought Members' support in taking that forward.

The Chief Executive commented that young people in Highland were amazing, and it was necessary for Members and officers to work together to promote their talents, abilities and skills and develop an approach that not only recognised attainment but achievement and inclusion. The earlier performance by the Dingwall Signing Choir and the stand in the Members' Lounge hosted by Inverness Royal Academy pupils were examples of some of the best inclusive practice in Scotland, and it was important to bring balance to the Education Committee and recognise the whole child. It was also important to work with parents, carers and partners to enable Highland's children to be the best they could be.

With regard to reported attainment in Highland, she explained that children's attainment had not been properly represented in terms of the moderation activity that had been carried out, some schools having been overly robust when making judgements about where a child was in their attainment journey. The Chair added that consistency of assessment and judgement by teaching staff was key, and this was something that needed to be worked on.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. scrutinised and **NOTED** the position in respect of attainment of the young people in the Highlands;
- ii. **NOTED** that, as a result of attainment meetings, Head Teachers and central officers would agree actions for improvement;
- iii. **NOTED** that a follow-up meeting of this Committee would take place in May 2020, when the performance of individual schools would be scrutinised along with the school actions for improvement for session 2020/21 in relation to the recently published Best Value Assurance Report;
- iv. **AGREED** the future actions to raise attainment and achievement for all young people across the Highlands;
- v. **AGREED** that arrangements be made for Education Improvement Team representatives to attend Ward Business Meetings and/or Area Committees as appropriate; and

- vi. **AGREED** that a Committee Work Plan be prepared in consultation with the Chair.

8. **Additional Support Needs (ASN)** **Feumalachdan Taice a Bharrachd**

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 their involvement in the discussion:

Mr K Gowans – parent of a child with ASN
Mr A Jarvie – employed by Inclusion Scotland
Ms E Knox – Non-Executive Director of CHIP+

There had been circulated Report No EDU/03/20 dated 24 February 2020 by the Chief Executive which accompanied a presentation during which parents present were commended for highlighting to Members so vividly what was recognised as a key issue. This would be the first in a series of reports to Members informing them of progress in ensuring ASN resources were used more effectively and that there was a model in place meeting the needs of all pupils. An extensive engagement process had taken place and it was clear that the current allocation model was not meeting the social, emotional and behavioural needs of young people. One of the proposals therefore being considered was upskilling Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) to give them a counselling qualification.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- the pressure placed on teachers and PSAs was acknowledged and anything that could be done to support them with the changes that would be required was vital;
- it was questioned whether the salaries of PSAs were high enough given that they were shaping the future of young people;
- while having PSAs with counselling qualifications was welcomed, not all PSAs would want to be upskilled. In this regard, assurances were sought, and provided, that the upskilling of PSAs would not be at the expense of Mental Health practitioners;
- the fact that there would be no PSA redundancies was welcomed but a plea was made to keep PSAs informed if there was a need for them to change location. Furthermore, assurances were sought that any vacancies that did arise would not be used for vacancy management to meet budget pressures;
- Highland Council might have more PSAs than other local authorities but it also had significantly fewer ASN teachers so any benchmarking exercise had to take this into consideration;
- the review should take as long as was necessary but concern was expressed that the timescale to consult on the preferred model and report back to the next Education Committee was tight;
- the time and effort that had been taken to engage with stakeholders was commended and, as a result, the data gathered had been qualitative. Over 5000 parents, teachers and pupils had taken part in often frank discussions and it was

important, given the level of concern, that due cognisance was taken of all the issues raised and that they helped shape the final decisions made;

- reference was made to the survey and it was disappointing that 25% of staff felt that the learning needs of children and young people were not being met, despite the considerable amount of financial resources allocated. Reference was made to other statistics too, including that 25% of primary and 43% of secondary school parents did not agree that their children received the help they needed to do well. Officers were commended for their frankness of reporting;
- in response to a question, it was confirmed that the risk of duplicate survey responses being received from the same person was negligible;
- there was support for making Children's Plans more child-friendly and less bureaucratic;
- there had been concern at the pace of transformational change of ASN and this had led to a disconnect between parents and the Council. Accordingly, the proposal to reconnect with parent groups was fully supported;
- the identification of the failings, and the root causes, of the current process was a good step forward. The existing model had been put in place only four years previously and had been lauded as a model which would solve everything. It was therefore difficult for the public and parents to understand what had changed and there was a perception that inefficiencies of the process were now seen as inequalities of resource;
- more careful analysis was needed to ascertain if the current provision was ensuring the needs of pupils with the highest levels of ASN were being met as there were parent groups who would question this;
- part of the reason that the current model had not worked was because it had not been adhered to and it would be important that did not happen again with the new model;
- a "one-size fits all" model would not work in Highland;
- it was essential for Members to trust the process and the officers carrying out the work. However, of even more importance was the need to keep the public fully aware of what was happening;
- whilst a holistic and collaborative approach should be adopted there would remain a need to challenge and interrogate outcomes;
- speed of diagnosis was vital to ensure timeous and appropriate support was put in place. Until that took place there would be a detrimental impact on both families and fellow pupils, with teachers having to spend more time with pupils with undiagnosed ASN;
- it was pleasing to see that cognisance had been taken of the importance of ensuring the wellbeing of staff;
- assurances were sought that officers were now confident that they were having the interactions that were required;
- as a new Committee there would be some Members who were less experienced and knowledgeable. They would have to rely on reports to provide detail and it was hoped additional information would be provided in the report to the next meeting of the Committee;
- it was questioned how future savings would be delivered by a combination of ongoing effective financial governance and Workforce Planning;
- information was sought as to the equality impact assessment approach being followed; and
- it would be useful to compare the Highland model of assessment with elsewhere. In this regard, information was sought as to how information on best practice was

shared with other Local Authorities. However, caution was urged as to how data was interpreted given Highland's uniqueness in terms of the number of schools and their locations, and the consequential limited mobility of its workforce.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the report;
- ii. **NOTED** that a Members workshop would take place to continue engagement in developing the new ASN model;
- iii. **NOTED** that consultation on the preferred model would take place between now and mid-April;
- iv. **NOTED** that a next steps report would be presented to the Education Committee on 21 May 2020; and
- v. **AGREED** that details of the equality impact approach that would be followed be circulated.

9. Review of Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) Agreement 23: Appointment Procedures – Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers (PP 32-33) Ath-sgrùdadh air Aonta 23 Comataidh Barganachaidh Ionadail airson Thidsearan: Modhan Cur an Dreuchd – Ceannardan agus Iar-Cheannardan

There had been circulated Report No EDU/04/20 dated 6 February 2020 by the Chief Executive.

Members generally welcomed the proposal to include an Education official on the final interview panel for Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers. However, there were other issues which Members felt needed to be reviewed such as the chairing of interviews, the composition of the panel, the need for a trained pool of Members and how to prepare parents to take part in the process. The appointment of a Head Teacher was important to a community and time should therefore be taken to do a root and branch review of the entire process. In addition, there had been an evident decline in the number of applicants for Head Teacher posts and it would be beneficial to look at how more high calibre candidates could be encouraged. Furthermore, there was no Member input to the appointment of Acting Head Teachers, some of whom might then be appointed to the position permanently, and this also merited consideration.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the position in relation to the ongoing review of LNCT 23: Appointment Procedures – Head Teachers and Depute Head Teachers; and
- ii. **AGREED** that a report looking at LNCT 23, taking into account all the points raised during discussion, be presented to the Education Committee on 21 May 2020.

**10. Early Years Update
Fios às Ùr mu Thràth-bhliadhnaichean**

There had been circulated Report No EDU/05/20 dated 18 February 2020 by the Chief Executive.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- updates on specific Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) capital projects could be obtained outwith the meeting;
- it was fundamental that local updates were provided to Elected Members;
- in response to a query, it was confirmed that there was capacity to deliver the expansion of ELC in all settings by August 2020;
- concern was expressed that the expansion of ELC would generate additional traffic. However, it was explained that this would be addressed by Safer Routes to Schools;
- the regular Committee reporting of the ELC programme was commended; and
- the table providing an analysis of the 84 ELC capital projects and the risk rating that had been applied would be useful at Ward Business Meetings. In this regard, the Chair undertook to have ELC Board Minutes from each area circulated to Members.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the update provided in relation to Early Years and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) expansion;
- ii. **NOTED** the status of ELC capital projects and the risk management actions being taken;
- iii. **AGREED** that updates be provided to Ward Business Meetings and Area Committees as a matter of course; and
- iv. **AGREED** that ELC Board Minutes from each area be circulated to Members.

**11. Review of the proposal to discontinue provision of education at Stoer Primary School, re-assigning its catchment area to that of Lochinver Primary School
Ath-sgrùdadh air a' mholadh gus solar foghlaim aig Bun-Sgoil an Stòir a sgur, a' cur na sgìre-sgoile ri Bun-Sgoil Loch an Inbhir**

There had been circulated Report No EDU/06/20 dated 5 February 2020 by the Chief Executive.

In discussion it was suggested that the current “mothballing” should continue as there was divided opinion within the community about the future of the school. In time, there might be a demographic change or more interest in requisitioning the building for community education purposes, and a repeat of school closures in remote areas, as had happened in Highland in the ‘80s and ‘90s, should be avoided. However, cognisance was taken of the children’s feedback, that the proposal had been parent led and that there was no evidence available to suggest that the school would be sustainable. Closure would allow formal consultation to take place with the community regarding the building’s future and would avoid deterioration of its fabric.

- * Thereafter, having considered the further representation received, the Committee **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the Council that education be discontinued at Stoer Primary School and its catchment transferred to that of Lochinver Primary School.

**12. Statutory Consultation – Gaelic Medium Catchment Proposals for the Plockton Associated School Group
Co-chomhairle Reachdail – Molaidhean Sgìre-sgoile Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig airson Buidheann Sgoiltean Co-cheangailte a’ Phluic**

Declaration of Interest: Mr A Graham declared a financial interest in this item on the grounds of being an employee of Bord Na Gaidhlig and left the Chamber during discussion of the item.

There had been circulated Report No EDU/07/20 dated 7 February 2020 by the Chief Executive.

The Committee **AGREED** to proceed to statutory consultation on the basis of the Proposal attached to the report.

The meeting concluded at 4.10 pm.

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee (Comataidh an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair)** held in the Chamber, Tigh na Sgìre, Park Lane, Portree on **Monday, 2 March, 2020 at 10.30 am.**

Present:

Mr J Finlayson
Mr J Gordon
Mr C MacLeod

In attendance:

Mr W MacKinnon, Ward Manager
Mr S Manning, Principal Traffic Officer
Mr G MacDonald, Senior Engineer (Ross, Skye & Lochalsh)
Ms J Bruce, Principal Housing Officer
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant

Also in Attendance:

Assistant Chief Constable J Hawkins, Police Scotland
Inspector L Allan, Police Scotland

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.

Mr J Gordon – Cathraiche (Chair)

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

There were circulated for information, Minutes of Meeting of the Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee (Comataidh an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair) held on 2 December, 2019, which were approved at the Highland Council meeting held on 9 December, 2019, the terms of which were **NOTED**.

4. **Police Scotland Local Committee Performance Report** **Aithisg Choileanaidh Comataidh Ionadail Poileas Alba**

There was circulated Report No SR/1/20 by the Area Inspector, Police Scotland.

During discussion, the following main points were raised by Members:-

- It was queried if local Police Officers were involved in discussions regarding the Skye cycle path initiative. There was a community event to discuss this initiative on Thursday, 5 March and organisers were keen to have as many public organisations involved as possible. Initially, plans were to develop a cycle path between Kyleakin and Broadford. Details of the community event would be forwarded to the Area Inspector who indicated that Police Scotland would be happy to assist in this initiative.
- Signage on trunk roads showing the protocol for overtaking cyclists may improve road safety;
- The number of people detected for speeding on Skye had increased given Police Scotland's focus on road safety. Police Scotland were consulted by The Highland Council and Transport Scotland on any speed limits that were proposed to be introduced and would provide statistics on road safety at specific locations.
- There had been a slight increase in the number of people detected for drink/drug driving offences on Skye. This was as a result of a media campaign on the issue of drink/drug driving and the intelligence that had been received from the public as a result.
- It was queried if staff resources had an impact on local Police Officers ability to undertake licensed premises checks. It was advised that the Police liaison with licensed premises would occur when Officers were in attendance at a licensed premises for an incident or proactively when Officers knew the premises would be open. Feedback from communities was that Officers seen in or around licensed premises did act as a deterrent to problems such as under age drinking or drug misuse.
- It was queried if local Officers had to deal with historical sexual crimes. It was advised that sexual crimes did not have a significant impact on local Officers and some of the historical cases would be dealt with by a national Police Unit.
- It was explained that there were various specialist units within Police Scotland that were there to assist local Officers when necessary, thereby allowing local Officers to continue with their normal operational duties.
- All intelligence related to serious and organised crime was monitored daily. In terms of drug misuse in the area, there was an affluent generation in the area who had a significant amount of disposable income and intelligence was used to determine how drugs were brought into the area so that the Police could target this. The level of drug related death was very high in Scotland and statistically the worst in Europe. Efforts to educate people and a joint approach by Public Organisations to tackle the problem of drugs would continue.
- In relation to the Climate Change conference to be held in Glasgow later this year, it was noted that the policing of the event would cost in the region of £250m. The Chief Constable had requested this funding from the UK

Government who were hosting the event. This event would have a significant impact on policing throughout Scotland.

- The demands on Police had changed significantly over the years to dealing more with domestic violence cases and cyber crime and the threat this posed to adults and children.
- Police Scotland received 3.2m calls a year, but less than 20% of these calls resulted in a crime being recorded. The majority of calls related to issues such as mental health and missing persons, incidents that people would not necessarily assume were the Police's responsibility.
- The financial challenges facing Police Scotland and the pressures this put on service delivery were highlighted;
- There were currently 2 vacancies in the Skye/Raasay area and it was intended to fill these by Police probationers. There were recruitment challenges in the North of Scotland area and there was a need for the right HR polices and recruitment strategies in place to encourage Police Officers to work in remote communities.
- Members felt that policing in the area was very positive and there was a good culture of local community connections which would draw valuable intelligence for policing in the area.
- The Skye and Raasay Police Scotland team won the top team award in Scotland which was excellent and well deserved and reflected the flexibility and loyalty of local Officers servicing the community.

Having scrutinised the Local Performance Report, the Committee **NOTED** progress made against the objectives set within the Highland and Islands Local Policing Plan 2017-20 Year 3, attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 1 April 2019- 31 December 2019.

5. Consideration of Traffic Regulation Order Objections Beachdachadh air Gearanan mu Òrdughan Riaghladh Trafaig

There was circulated Report No. SR/2/20 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment relating to the On-street pay and display proposed for Ford Road, Broadford.

It was the Services' view that the proposed Pay and Display parking was an effective tool to allow proper management of on street parking at this location and the amendments already made to the proposed timings and tariffs were reasonable.

During discussion, it was noted that this had been a long standing local issue in Broadford and that the local community and local businesses had initially come forward with concerns about traffic management in Ford Road, Broadford. There had been representations that people were parking their cars in this area for a week and people parking their cars and then using public transport to Portree or Inverness.

It was noted that some of the objections to the Traffic Order were that staff in local businesses would have to park their car elsewhere and walk to work, often in poor weather conditions. However, the point was made that this would apply to many other areas where people required to park their car and walk to work. Further, it was felt that, arising from the consultation, the adjustments that had now been made to the Traffic Regulation Order were reasonable i.e. the free parking period

was increased from 0.5 hrs to 1 hr, charging times were reduced from 12 to 8 months and the maximum stay increased from 2 to 3 hours.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** that the Traffic Regulation Order as advertised is made in so far as it relates to matters deliberated by this Committee and the objections to the Ford Road Pay & Display proposals as advertised, are set aside.

**6. Housing Revenue Account: Garage Rents 2020/21
Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Taigheadais: Màil Gharaidsean 2020/21**

There was circulated Report No. SR/3/20 by the Executive Chief Officer Property and Housing which provided information on garage rents for Skye & Raasay and invited the Committee to set rent levels for garages held on the Housing Revenue Account for 2020/21.

Following consideration, the Committee **AGREED** a 3% level of rent increase to apply to Skye and Raasay Garages.

**7. Roads Maintenance Programme 2020/21
Prògram Càradh Rathaidean airson 2020/21**

There was circulated Report No. SR/4/20 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- The Bayfield Project had an allowance for puffin crossings to be installed;
- There would be surface dressing in Portree Village at locations yet to be determined;
- The schedule of works in the Roads Maintenance Programme was based on last year's financial allocation and it was anticipated that, if there was good weather, the planned programme of works would be completed.
- In light of concerns expressed by communities regarding road conditions, if there was no additional roads funding from the Council budget meeting this week, it was queried what the impact would be. It was advised that all other schemes not on the programme would be included in the structural maintenance road patching programme. This programme would be extensive and ongoing throughout the year, outwith the surface dressing & surfacing programme as weather and resources allow.
- If part of the recommended increase in Council tax was to be ring fenced for additional funds for roads maintenance, a new programme of surfacing would be drawn up for the Local Committee's approval. It would also enable additional work to be carried out by the Jetpatcher on unclassified roads.
- In terms of the Skye/Raasay single track network, 75% of roads were "U" or "C" Class. It was explained that these roads were cart tracks that had evolved by putting tarmac on them, but they were not designed to carry any significant traffic. These single track roads cannot cope and were at the end of their useful life and they will continue to deteriorate if untreated.
- There was a suggestion that the roads allocation across Highland should be changed to take account of double track roads in Inverness. These roads were properly engineered and new compared with some of the roads on Skye/Raasay.
- Road maintenance allocations were based on road length, but there were very few new housing schemes on Skye and therefore the chances of

increasing road length in this area was limited, whereas in Inverness their road length was continuously increasing due to new developments.

- The last significant road building schemes on Skye, with the exception of the A851 Broadford to Armadale Road, was under the Crofter Counties Road schemes whereby single track roads were enhanced to double track roads. Since then there was only road maintenance of the existing network.
- Repairing pot holes was a priority for roads teams;
- Drainage was one of the most important factors in maintaining roads and a programme of works was being planned.
- The white lining machine was currently in Fort William and as soon as it was available for the Skye/Raasay area, training for staff on using the machine would commence. There was a commitment to complete a programme of lining works associated with the 'Keep Left' campaign;
- In terms of external contractors installing fibre cables for Broadband or utilities works, some communities had stated that the contractors were not reinstating the verges following completion of the works. The Council had a duty to inspect contractors work on roads and contractors had a duty to reinstate roads to a good condition. It was advised that the Council's Roads Inspector would deal with such issues.

Thereafter, the Committee **APPROVED** the proposed 2020/21 Roads Maintenance Programme for Isle of Skye & Raasay Area.

The meeting ended at 12.20 p.m.