

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Waste Strategy Working Group** held Remotely on Friday 7 August 2020 at 10.00 pm.

Present:-

Mr C Fraser
Mr A Henderson
Mr D Macpherson

Mr H Morrison
Ms P Munro
Mrs T Robertson

In attendance:-

Mr C Howell, Head of Infrastructure, Development and Infrastructure Service
Mr A McKinnie, Waste Operations Manager, Communities and Place Service
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Chief Executive's Service

Also in attendance:-

Mr D Jamieson, Technical Director, SLR Consulting Limited
Mr M Nevin, Nevin Associates Limited

Business

1. Appointment of Chair

Having been duly proposed and seconded, Mr A Henderson was appointed Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr J Bruce, Mr R Gale and Mr A MacInnes.

3. Declarations of Interest

Item 4 – Mr D Macpherson (non-financial)

4. Waste Projects Update

Declaration of Interest – Mr D Macpherson declared a financial interest in this item as a relative was a landowner of a site in Fort William and took no part in the discussion surrounding that particular matter.

There had been circulated Report No WS/01/20 dated 31 July 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment during which Members were updated on the Longman Waste Management facility, the new waste transfer stations at Aviemore and Fort William. The existing contractual arrangements at these 3 sites ended this year so, to bridge the gap until the completion of the Waste Transfer Stations, flexible replacement service contracts would be put in place with the existing contractors.

The proposed sites in Fort William were explored in more detail. While there was potential for it to be located as part of the Carrs Corner Depot, this had elsewhere led to difficulties in terms of layout and the potential for cross contamination. A stand alone site which could be purchased would be preferable.

The Working Group **NOTED**:-

- i. the range of change factors which the Waste Service was seeking to plan for and accommodate into service delivery;
- ii. that the findings of the energy-from-waste feasibility study were to be presented to the Working Group at this meeting; and
- iii. the progress and development timescales for the Inverness, Aviemore and Fort William waste transfer stations.

5. Presentation – Energy from Waste Feasibility Assessment

Mr Diarmid Jamieson, Technical Director, SLR Consulting Limited and Mr Mike Nevin, Nevin Associates Limited gave a presentation outlining the key findings of the Feasibility Assessment of establishing an Energy-from-Waste facility at Longman, Inverness. During the presentation, Members were provided with detailed information including the predicted level of residual waste, the development programme, the energy usage opportunities, the attributes of the proposed site, the technologies suitable for the project. 3rd Party waste processing markets, the costs and income potential of the options and a carbon assessment.

During discussion, Members made the following points:-

- in response to a question, it was confirmed that it would be necessary to commission a study from Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) in relation to energy being incorporated into the electricity grid. In this regard, it was emphasised that it was vital a robust connection was made with the grid;
- while it was possible not to use SSEN and to by-pass the grid, it was pointed out that the plant's other customer(s) would have to be high energy users;
- the possibility of Caledonian Thistle Football Club using some of the energy for the under-pitch heating was a possibility that was yet to be explored;
- Members were keen to see renewable energy generated in Highland used for our own consumption and to help fight fuel poverty;
- every avenue needed to be explored to exploit this opportunity, particularly as Highland paid more for its energy than elsewhere;
- the EfW plants in Aberdeen and Inverurie were explained insofar as the Aberdeen facility was using domestic refuse while it was proposed that the Inverurie one would be for more commercial waste. However, with the provision of EfW plants generally there was a fear that there would be a need to shop around for feedstock;

- an EfW plant at the Longman could generate a wide spectrum of jobs which, in turn, would benefit the Highland economy; and
- currently Highland Council were paying Landfill Tax to the Scottish Government, a considerable sum of money which would be saved if an EfW plant was built;

The Working Group **NOTED** the presentation.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group **NOTED** that the next meeting was scheduled for 20 November 2020.

The meeting ended at 12.05 p.m.