

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Nairnshire Committee** held in the Chamber, The Courthouse, High Street, Nairn, on Wednesday 11 March 2020 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr L Fraser
Mr T Heggie

Mrs L MacDonald
Mr P Saggars

In attendance:

Mr W Munro, Interim Ward Manager, Chief Executive's Office
Mr R Porteous, Roads Operations Manager, Community Services
Ms S MacLennan, Housing Manager (South), Community Services
Mr J Henderson, Housing Investment Officer, Community Services
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

Also in attendance:

Area Inspector V Tough, Police Scotland (Item 4)

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 T Heggie in the Chair

Preliminaries

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, the Chair advised that the press would be allowed to record the meeting since it was a committee meeting held in public and was not webcast.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

Item 7: Mr L Fraser (non-financial)

3. Presentation: Nairn BID Update Taisbeanadh: Fios às Ùr mu Sgìre Leasachadh Gnothachais Inbhir Narann

The Committee was informed that Nairn BID was not yet ready to present this information and the Ward Manager would confirm whether this would be presented to a future Ward Business Meeting.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** that this item be deferred.

4. Police Scotland – Area Performance Summary Poileas Alba – Geàrr-chunntas Dèanadais Sgìreil

There had been circulated Report No. NC/01/20 dated 25 February 2020 by the South Highland Area Commander.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:

- Further information was sought on how many of the eleven drink drivers reported in the South Highland Area were from Nairnshire;
- Confirmation was provided that there was no awareness of organised crime in respect of goods supplied to the Council;
- Further information was sought and provided in regard to recruitment of specialists; and
- The report emphasised the extensive range of skills required of Police officers and the broad variety of activities they undertook. Overall the results of the performance report were very positive and the Committee expressed their appreciation to Police Scotland for their work.

The Committee **NOTED** the 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. Roads Maintenance Programme 2020/21 Prògram Càradh Rathaidean 2020/21

There had been circulated Report No. NC/02/20 dated 24 February 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:

- The Committee welcomed the news that the Roads Maintenance Programme would be allocated additional funding. Further information was sought on which additional works would be prioritised as result of this and it was emphasised that the funds should be spread as widely across the Nairnshire area as possible. In addition, it was felt that capacity within the team was limited and news that additional support was being sought was welcomed. It was requested that if a new member of staff was appointed they be invited to attend a future Ward Business Meeting;
- It was queried how the communities of East Nairnshire, particularly in Ferness, could implement speeding restrictions and it was confirmed that another survey was planned for this area;
- Confirmation was sought and provided that Winter Maintenance would be on budget;
- It was requested that investigations be made into the feasibility of undertaking the necessary repairs to the road East of Kingsteps and obtaining developer contributions towards this. It was further highlighted that the Auchnacloch – Milhill – Drumduan road was also in a poor condition; and
- There was also a need for individual drivers to take responsibility, driving safely and within the designated speed limits, which would help to preserve the longevity of the roads.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the proposed 2020/21 Roads Maintenance Programme for the Nairnshire area; and
- ii. **AGREED** to investigate the feasibility of obtaining developer contributions to undertake the necessary repairs to the road East of Kingsteps and that if the appointment of a new member of staff came to fruition they be invited to attend a future Ward Business Meeting.

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

There had been circulated Report No. NC/03/20 dated 12 February 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Property and Housing.

During discussion it was confirmed that, in accordance with Council policy, Council tenants were prioritised in respect of the allocation of garages and that VAT had been included within the rental income set out in paragraph 6.2 of the report.

The Committee **AGREED** a 3% rent increase be applied to Nairnshire Garages and Garage sites.

7. Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2019 to 31 December 2019 Aithisg Coileanaidh Taigheadais – 1 Giblean 2019 gu 31 Dùbhlachd 2019

Declaration of Interest: Mr L Fraser declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Sub-Contractor for the Housing Service in Nairn but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No. NC/04/20 dated 27 February 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Property and Housing.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:

- It was queried whether the new Contractors Framework would impact on emergency repairs. And although still within target, the time for emergency and non-emergency repairs had risen very slightly and the reason for this was queried;
- A lot of work was being undertaken proactively within the area by the Maintenance Officer which was positive and was also helpful in terms of ensuring prudent and effective spending;
- The work of the local Tenant Participation Officer was praised for their engagement and positive involvement with tenants; and
- Further information was sought and provided on the reasons for the delays to the Capital Programme in respect of the Kitchen Replacements and Rewires work contracts.

The Committee **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 December 2019.

8. Nairn Common Good Fund – Budget Setting for 2020/21 and Quarter 3 2019/20 Monitoring Report
Maoin Maitheas Coitcheann Inbhir Narann – Suidheachadh Buidseit airson 2020/21 agus Aithisg Sgrùdaidh Cairteil 3 2019/20

There had been circulated Report No. NC/05/20 dated 28 February 2020 by the Acting Head of Policy.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:

- It was queried whether separate Common Good Fund insurance cover was necessary and whether this could instead be provided by the Council's self-insurance fund;
- It was queried and confirmed that costs for the Common Good Funds Officer were allocated according to time worked on individual area funds. The Chair further reported that Nairn Common Good Fund generated the highest officer costs for the Highland area;
- It was suggested that the line under Income showing Contribution – Links development (Team Hamish) should be removed from Appendix 2 – Quarter 3 monitoring as it should be assigned to financial year 2020/21 only. Monies anticipated in financial year 2019/20 were now going to be received during 2020/21 and should be accounted for accordingly; and
- It was indicated that the value of assets within the Nairn Common Good Fund were unlikely to increase in future and it was recommended that the Committee, as Trustees, should have cognisance of this. It was further reported that work was underway to ensure that the the level of developer contributions were increased which would cause the land value to reduce further. In addition, the UK was one of the very few countries whereby all the planning gain went to the land owner, i.e. no contribution to the local authority. There had been press speculation that this might change and if so the value of the land would reduce rapidly. The complexities of the situation were therefore recognised along with the need for future analysis to determine how the fund assets could best be utilised.

Following discussion, the Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** the Nairn Common Good Fund budget for 2020/21 detailed within the report;
- ii. scrutinised and **NOTED** the position of the Nairn Common Good Fund as shown in the Quarter 3 Revenue Monitoring Statement against Budget;
- iii. **AGREED** to:-
 - a. obtain clarity on whether local Common Good Funds could utilise the Council's self-insurance fund or whether they required their own separate insurance policy; and
 - b. investigate whether the Team Hamish allocation of £110,000 should be assigned to financial year 2020/21.

9. Minutes of Previous Meeting
Geàrr-chunntas na Coinneimh Roimhe

There had been circulated and **NOTED** the Minutes of Meeting of the Nairnshire Committee held on 27 November 2019, which were approved by the Council on 9 December 2019.

The meeting concluded at 11.40am.