

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Nairnshire Committee** held remotely Wednesday 2 December 2020 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr L Fraser
Mr T Heggie

Mrs L MacDonald
Mr P Saggars

In attendance:

Ms K Lackie, ECO Performance & Governance
Mr W Munro, Interim Ward Manager
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager
Mr D Chisholm, Planner
Mr D Wood, Principal Housing Officer
Mr R Porteous, Roads Operations Manager
Mr A Webster, Principal Regeneration Officer
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator, Chief Executive's Office

Also in attendance:

Mr R Nixon, Local Senior Officer for Highland (Item 3)

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

BUSINESS

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

Item 5: Mr L Fraser (non-financial)
Item 7: Mr P Saggars (non-financial)

3. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Local Committee Performance Report for 2020-21 Seirbheis Smàlaidh agus Teasairginn na h-Alba – Aithisg Coileanaidh na Comataidh Ionadail airson 2020-21

There had been circulated Report No **NC/10/20** dated 13 November 2020 by the Local Senior Officer for Highland (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service).

During discussion, it was explained that the establishment figure for Nairn Station was a maximum of 20. There was a need for an availability of 10 at all times therefore Nairn was currently in a very strong position with good availability. The Chair requested that the Committee's appreciation be conveyed to the local fire fighters for their diligent work and their commitment to the safety of the community.

The Committee **NOTED** the Area Performance Report attached to the report.

4. Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 – Main Issues Report Plana Leasachaidh Ionadail Linne Mhoireibh A-staigh 2 – Aithisg Phrìomh Chùisean

There had been circulated Report No **NC/11/20** dated 16 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment. The Main Issues Report had been circulated separately as Booklet A. A presentation was made in support of the report during which officers explained the process and the contents of the Main Issues Report. In addition, it was explained that there had been an error in the Auldearn map shown in Appendix 1 of the papers presented. A map had been shown at the meeting indicating the corrected boundary to Alternative site AU02, Meadowfield Steadings, Auldearn to include the adjoining paddock to the south and approval was sought for this be amended in the Main Issues Report.

During discussion, the following main points had been raised:-

- It was acknowledged that the consultation could not undertake face to face responses due to the current pandemic and it was queried whether the Plan could be displayed publicly, e.g. at the local library/community centre to enable viewing;
- With regard to neighbour notification, it was explained that all households would receive notification of the Plan and be encouraged to respond to the consultation and this was welcomed. The importance of reaching hard to reach people and motivating them to respond was emphasised;
- It was disheartening that social media campaigns against the Plan had already started. It was hoped that the public would consider the wider needs for Nairnshire, which included a high demand for affordable housing, and respond positively to the Plan;
- Assurance was provided that consideration had been given to the land surrounding the sawmill to ensure any future development to this area would not impact on the ongoing operations of the mill;
- Concern was expressed that addressing the Climate and Ecological Emergency had been assigned as a key priority within the Plan but many local residents might view affordable housing and economic growth of more importance and it was felt that there should be greater emphasis on these local aspects. It was indicated that due to the subsidies levied, Scotland had the most expensive charges for electricity in Europe and these green policies were a direct hindrance to economic growth. In addition, there were beneficial side effects to climate change, such as fuel poverty being reduced due to increasing temperatures and this was welcomed; and

- It was noted that the Plan had not made reference to open/green spaces and it was thought that the Farmers Showfield green space within NA12 would be protected. Further information was sought on density in terms of NA12 but it was explained that the Plan did not indicate any potential yield from sites. In addition, if no applications had previously been forthcoming for this area it was suggested that this area should be excluded and the land revert to its previous status and assurance was provided that this option had been considered as part of the process.

The Committee:-

- APPROVED** the Main Issues Report (as applicable to this Committee area) subject to the 'Alternative' site AU02, Meadowfield Steadings, Auldearn being expanded to include the adjoining paddock to the south and **AGREED** that it be published for public consultation, accepting that a number of minor presentational and typographical changes would be made prior to publication;
- AGREED** the approach to consultation outlined in paragraph 6.1 of the report;
- NOTED** the important role that the Plan would play in addressing the Climate & Ecological Emergency, economic recovery, and in taking forward The Highland Council's agreed Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy recently submitted to Scottish Government; and
- AGREED** to investigate the Plan being displayed locally for public viewing.

**5. Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020
Aithisg Coileanaidh Taigheadais – 1 Giblean 2020 gu 30 Sultain 2020**

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/12/20** dated 10 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property.

During discussion, the following main points had been raised:-

- Concern was expressed at the increasing rent arrears trend and although the diligent efforts of the team were welcome, it was queried whether this could be brought back on track;
- Officers were commended for their efforts which were reflected in the performance results, particularly in regard to the Average re-let time and non-emergency repairs;
- Confirmation was provided that the Clerk of Works vacancy had been filled;
- It was indicated that it was difficult for suppliers to allocate payments against individual invoices as the Council often made a bulk payment by BACs. Confirmation was provided that this would be investigated; and

- Overall this was a good set of performance results and further information was sought on the reason for the increase in the Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs particularly compared to the rest of Highland.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- NOTED** the information provided on housing performance for the period 1 April to 30 September 2020; and
- AGREED** to investigate the bulk payment of invoices by BACs and to clarify the reason for the increase in the Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs particularly compared to the rest of Highland.

6. **Area Road Structures Annual Report 2019/20** **Aithisg Bhliadhnail Structaran Rathaid Sgìreil 2019/20**

There had been circulated Report No **NC/13/20** dated 12 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, confirmation was provided that none of the bridges categorised as poor condition were at risk of restrictions/closures and that Montgomery Drive was now an adopted road. With regard to the ownership of footbridges, it was confirmed that Scottish Water was responsible for the Sewage bridge and clarification would be provided on whether the Council was responsible for the Auldearn burn footbridge.

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report and **AGREED** clarification be provided on whether the Council was responsible for the footbridge over the Auldearn burn.

7. **Town Centre Fund** **Maoin Meadhan a' Bhaile**

Declaration of Interest: Mr P Saggars declared a non-financial interest in this item as a director of Nairn Bid 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/14/20** dated 16 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, the Committee indicated their support for the report and the Chair proposed that the words 'an established organisation' be replaced with 'Nairn Bid' in recommendation i and that a special meeting be held as soon as required.

The Committee:-

- AGREED** to provisionally awarding the Town Centre Fund (TCF) allocation for Nairn to Nairn Bid whose remit aligned with the objectives of the TCF. On the proviso that they develop an eligible project(s) in accordance with criteria and carry out appropriate stakeholder engagement; and

- ii. a Special meeting of the Committee be arranged as soon as practical to agree the final detail of the project.

**8. Nairn Common Good Fund: Quarter 2 Monitoring 2020/21 Report
Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Narann – Aithisg Sgrùdaidh Cairteil 2
2020/21**

There had been circulated Joint Report No NC/15/20 dated 17 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance and Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place.

During discussion, the Committee was informed that as at 30 September 2020 much of the loss in value to the Investment Portfolio had been recovered following the improvement to the UK financial markets and it was anticipated that the value at the year-end would be the same as that in 2019.

The Committee **NOTED** the position of the Nairn Common Good Fund as shown in the Quarter 2 Revenue Monitoring Statement against Budget for 2020/21.

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

There had been circulated and **NOTED** Minutes of Meeting of the Nairnshire Committee held on 16 September 2020, which were approved by the Council on 29 October 2020.

The meeting was concluded at 12.20pm.