

Agenda Item	7
Report No	WRSL/022/21

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh

Date: 4 November 2021

Report Title: Skye and Lochalsh Local Access Forum Appointments

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to detail the work of the Local Access Forum and for committee Members to approve the appointment of new forum members.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to approve the appointment of the members of the public who have applied to be members of the Local Access Forum for Skye and Lochalsh as set out in Table 2.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – funding from within existing resources to cover meeting rooms, site visits, hospitality and travelling expenses.
- 3.2 **Legal** – No implications.
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)** - Membership of the forum is open to all those who qualify for one of the three membership categories.
- 3.4 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever** - Forum members are encouraged to share transport to meetings and when site meetings are necessary an appropriate vehicle is hired to transport all Forum members to the site (where allowable under Covid protocols). Online Teams meetings may be used if appropriate.

3.5 **Risk** – No implications

3.6 **Gaelic** – No implications.

4 Introduction

4.1 Local Access Forums were created in Highland in 2005 as a duty of the Council set out in the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

4.2 The Local Access Forum advises the Council on countryside access issues and provides assistance in resolving disputes in relation to the exercise of access rights, the delineation and existence of public rights of way and the amendment of the Council core paths plan.

4.3 The membership of the forum is made up of 10 members of the public and two Highland Councillors. Representation is balanced across a range of interested groups in each of the following categories.

- **Land managers** – estate owners, crofters, farmers, foresters (3 representatives)
- **Community groups** – community councils, environmental groups, local path development groups (3 representatives)
- **Access takers** – walkers, cyclists, horse riders, canoeists (3 representatives)
- **Disability access panel** – one representative.

4.4 Local access forums in Highland operate across the following geographical areas:-

- Caithness;
- Sutherland;
- Ross and Cromarty;
- Skye and Lochalsh;
- Lochaber (includes the Corrieyairack Pass to Garvamore in Badenoch and Strathspey); and
- Inverness and Nairn (includes the northern end of Dava Moor up to Easter Cottartown)

4.5 The Council appoints members to the forum and this power is delegated to the area committees.

4.6 The forums meet once a year but can meet more frequently should demand arise for the forum's feedback. Members of the Forum are entitled to claim travel and approved out of pocket expenses from the Access budget in the Infrastructure, Environment and Economy Service.

5 Existing forum membership and new applicants

5.1 Existing members of the Local Access Forum were asked if they wished to continue with their membership, and these members are detailed in Table 1 below.

5.2 A public notice was advertised in the West Highland Free Press on Friday 17 October 2021 for new members to fill the vacant places. The applications received are summarised in Table 2 below.

- 5.3 The applicants and a summary of their application has already been circulated to the existing Forum members for their comments.
- 5.4 The Forum has four vacant positions: one land manager and one access user, and two community representatives. We received 4 applications for the vacant positions, and they fit with the role vacancies.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

Date: 19 October 2021

Author: Mark Crowe, Access Officer, Skye and Lochalsh

Table 1

Existing members of the Local Access Forum

Name	Representative Group	Comments
Ally Macaskill	Land Manager	John Muir Trust
Willie Fraser	Land Manager	National Trust Scotland
Vacant	Land Manager	
Rob Ware	Community Group	Sleat CC
Vacant	Community Group	
Vacant	Community Group	
Alistair Danter	Access User	Equine users
Nicholas Bullivant	Access User	Mountaineering Scotland
Vacant	Access User	
Jim Towers	Disability Access Panel	SandL Access Panel
Cllr Isabelle Campbell	Highland Councillor	Ward 5- Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh
Cllr Calum MacLeod	Highland Councillor	Ward 10- Isle of Skye and Raasay

Table 2

Applications to the Local Access Forum

Name	Representative Group	Comments
Cheryl McIntyre	Land Manager	North Talisker Grazings; Scottish Crofting Federation Director
Angus Murray	Community Group	Project Officer, Staffin Community Trust
Matt Harrison	Community Group	ACE Academy; West Coast Outdoor and Woodland Learning (OWL) group
Sarah Sutton	Access User	Outdoor Activity Business; Cuillin Dubh Hill Runners