

Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Black Isle Committee** held remotely via Microsoft Teams on 16 November 2021 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr G Adam
Mrs J Barclay
Mr C Fraser

In attendance:

Mr M Rodgers, ECO Property and Housing
Mrs D Ferguson, Senior Ward Manager, Communities and Place
Ms D Agnew, Ward Manager (Black Isle, Dingwall and Seaforth), Communities and Place
Mr R MacLeod, Area Housing Manager, Housing and Property
Mr D Martin, Area Care and Learning Manager
Mr T Stott, Principal Planner, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy
Ms S Lamb, EFF Regional Development Officer, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy
Ms I MacIver, Housing Options Officer, Property and Housing
Mrs A MacArthur, Administrative Assistant, Performance and Governance

Also in attendance:

Inspector R Ross, Police Scotland

Mr Steve Bramwell, Black Isle Men's Shed

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

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulans

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Police – Area Performance Summary Poilis – Geàrr-chunntas Dèanadais Sgìreil

There had been circulated Report No BI/006/21 dated 28 October 2021 by the North Area Commander.

In discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- disappointed to see the figures for assaults on emergency workers;
- in response to a question on missing people it was confirmed that there were currently no outstanding missing people in the area at this time; and
- an interest was expressed in figures for scams both on-line and by telephone in this area. There had been an increase in figures from the start of the Covid lockdown.

The Committee **NOTED**:

- i. progress made against the objectives set within the Highland and Islands Local Policing Plan 2017-2021 Year 2, attached as Annex A to this report, for the period covering 01 April 2021 – 30 September 2021; and
- ii. information on the number of incidents in relation to scams reported to Police Scotland to be provided to Members.

Black Isle Men's Shed Presentation

There followed a presentation from Mr Steve Bramwell of the Black Isle Men's Shed on a community initiative for an electric-assisted mobility trishaw taxi enabling people to get into the fresh air and to interact with other members of their community. This would help combat social isolation and mobility issues for people in the area.

The Committee thanked Mr Bramwell for his presentation and wished the Black Isle Men's Shed every success in their venture.

4. Housing Performance Report Aithisg Dèanadais a thaobh Taigheadais

There had been circulated Report No BI/007/21 dated 16 November 2021 Executive Chief Officer – Property and Housing.

In discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- there had been a welcome reduction in rent arrears with concern expressed at the reduction in the £20 uplift payment for people on universal credit. Housing Management Officers were monitoring rent arrears and were in daily contact with Housing Maximisation Service and made referrals to this service. Tenant Support Officers also assisted tenants having trouble paying their rent;
- there was an increase in homeless presentations following a stable period, possibly due to the increased movement of people following Covid restrictions; and
- clarification on the figure for reactive repairs. There was a general issue with contractor availability across all services. There were also in-house tradesmen who carried out some repair work. The figure further reflected when there might be additional work required following an emergency repair. This was the figure for Ross and Cromarty Area and work was being undertaken to disaggregate this figure to the area committees.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

**5. Ross and Cromarty Educational Trust
Urras Foghlaim Rois is Chromba**

There had been circulated Report No BI/008/21 dated 26 October 2021 by the Area Care and Learning Manager.

In discussion, the following responses were given:-

- it was not known where shares in the Trust were invested, details of investments and possible improvements would be brought back to a ward meeting;
- interested to also learn if, with the size of the capital in the trust, an improved return could be earned while still limiting the liability; and
- the Trust was monitored by the finance service and the Trust had last been reviewed approximately two years ago when no real changes had been suggested.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the report; and
- ii. **AGREED** that details of investments and the possibility of maximising the return be investigated and brought to the Ward Business Meeting.

**6. Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan 2
Plana Leasachaidh Ionadail Linne Mhoireibh**

There had been circulated Report No BI/009/21 dated 21 October 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

In discussion, the following responses were given:-

- Members were appreciative of the work involved in the Development Plan and thanked the Team for the tremendous amount of work undertaken;
- local development plans are only permitted to control development down to low water mark. There was a national Marine Plan and there was also to be a Regional Marine Plan and the Highland Council would be one of many organisations preparing that plan. It will be the policy document to control marine development. Within the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan, NatureScot had requested that planning officers assess any onshore development for any impact offshore.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the issues raised by respondents to the consultation on local/City committee-specific matters and agree the recommended responses to these issues both as detailed at **Appendix 1**;
- ii. **NOTED** the issues raised by respondents to the consultation on strategic matters and officer recommended responses both as detailed at **Appendix 2** and recommend to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee the local/City committee's view on these strategic matters;

- iii. **NOTED** additional supporting documents will accompany the publication of the Proposed Plan, including those outlined in section 3 below;
- iv. **NOTED** that minor presentational, typographical and other factual updates and changes will be made by officers, with any material changes to be agreed in consultation and agreement with the chair of the relevant committee(s) prior to publication;
- v. **AGREED**, in line with government guidance, for the published Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan to be treated as a material planning consideration in making planning decisions and providing advice; and
- vi. **AGREED** the approach to consultation outlined in section 7 of this report.

7. Highland Coastal Communities Fund Maoin Coimhearsnachdan Cladaich na Gàidhealtachd – Measadh Iarrtasan

There had been circulated Report No BI/010/21 dated 27 October 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

The Committee **APPROVED** funding for the Ferintosh Community Hall of £6,557.91, subject to the conditions outlined in the report.

8. Place Based Investment Funds – Proposed Funding Allocations Maoin Tasgaidh Stèidhichte air Àite

There had been circulated Report No BI/011/21 dated 8 November 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer – Communities and Place.

The Committee **AGREED**:-

- i. £20,000 for Mental Health and Wellbeing with a particular focus on young people, older people and disabled people to reduce increased feelings of anxiety or social isolation. Funding to be delegated to Fortrose Academy - Black Isle Wellbeing Group;
- ii. £25,000 for Community Spaces (Play, Environment, Green Space) Recognising the increased usage of open spaces and supporting local projects to improve play opportunities. Funding to be delegated to the Council's Amenities team for direct delivery.
- iii. £25,000 to establish a grant fund for investment in community-led projects to address the four harms of Covid.
- iv. £30,000 to Support Sustainable Economic Recovery - to address how the pandemic has impacted on the economic recovery; including tourism, training and employment. A proposal on how this will be delivered would be considered at the next meeting of this committee.

9. Common Good Funds Maoin Maith Choitchinn

There had been circulated Report Nos BI/012/21 – BI/013/21 dated 3 November 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place and Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance.

- a. Cromarty Common Good Fund BI/008/21
- b. Fortrose and Rosemarkie Common Good Fund BI/009/21

The Committee **NOTED** the updated information provided in relation to each Fund.

10. Black Isle Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2021-2022 Prògram Calpa Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Eilein Duibh 2021-2022

There had been circulated Report No BI/014/21 dated 1 November 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer – Housing and Property.

Concern was expressed at the potentially disproportionate cost to the Highland Council of complying with legislation to make buildings wind and water in relation to conservation areas and housing with listed building status. Mr Rodgers advised that regardless of the listed building status of a house the Council had a statutory obligation to ensure Council housing was wind and watertight.

As the service centre was busy with the reporting of Council house repairs, it was requested that the service centre explore caller notification that could indicate the length of time a caller may need to wait on a call or the position the caller had in the queue.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the allocation of resources to Black Isle Area as set out at 5.5;
- ii. **NOTED** the guideline investment priorities as set out in sections 5.2 of the report;
- iii. **AGREED** the proposed one-year HRA Capital Programme for Black Isle Area 2021-22 as set out in Appendix 1; and
- iv. **NOTED** that updates on the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme will continue to be provided through ward briefings and at future Local Committees as requested by local Members, in addition to reporting to Housing and Property Committee; and
- v. **NOTED** that caller notifications for service centre calls would be investigated.

11. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

There was circulated and **NOTED** Minutes of Meeting of the Black Isle Committee held on 5 August 2021 which were approved by the Council on 9 September 2021.

The meeting closed at 12:40 pm.