

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Committee** held remotely via Microsoft Teams on 4 November 2021 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mrs I Campbell
Dr I Cockburn

Mr A MacInnes

In attendance:

Mrs D Ferguson, Senior Ward Manager, Communities and Place

Mr W Mackinnon, Policy and Reform, Communities and Place

Mr R MacLeod, Housing Manager (North), Property and Housing

Mr M Crowe, Access Officer, Development and Infrastructure

Mr S Manning, Principal Traffic Officer, Roads and Transport

Mr T Stott, Principal Planner, Planning and Environment

Ms J Bain, Planner, Planning and Development

Miss S Tarrant, Corporate Communications and Engagement Officer, Chief Executive's Office

Mrs A MacArthur, Administrative Assistant, Performance and Governance

Also in attendance:

Chief Inspector K MacLeod, Police Scotland

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 Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were initiated on behalf of Mr D MacLeod.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

There were no declarations of interest.

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

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There had been circulated Report No WRSL/018/21 dated 21 October 2021 by the North Area Commander.

CI Scott MacDonald had been appointed as the North Area Commander. Until he was able to take up his post, Chief Inspector Kevin MacLeod would be covering the post in the interim.

In relation to road users there had been considerably more motor homes this year.

The ranger service had been key to making lives easier and had been commented on and welcomed by the local community. The Rangers were to be retained for next year with seven being retained throughout the winter.

There was a problem with speeding in almost every village and this was the subject of a lot of complaints. It was however apparent that the speeding offences had been mostly from locals and not the tourists. CI MacLeod asked that the Council took this on board and developed traffic calming measures within these villages to slow the traffic down.

The Committee **NOTED**:

- i. progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2020-2023 Year 1, attached as Annex A to this report, for the period covering 01 April 2020 – 31 March 2021.

4. Housing Performance Report Aithisg Dèanadais a thaobh Taigheadais

There had been circulated Report No WRSL/019/21 dated 24 October 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer – Property and Housing which provides Members with information on how the Housing Section performed in relation to the Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators up to 30 September 2021.

During discussion, the following responses had been given:-

- there had been increases in rent arrears in previous years, one reason for this had been the impact of universal credit and this has been alleviated by working through payment schedules. There was an increase in stock which resulted in more allocations and sometimes a lag in receiving benefits which added to the rent arrears. Rent arrears may be further impacted by the increase in energy prices and the loss of the £20 additional payment to recipients of universal credit;
- the Ross team works very hard managing a heavy and complex caseload in relation to homeless people with several factors in relation to homelessness to keep an eye on. There was a statutory and a moral duty to assist people in dire circumstances. As affordability becomes more difficult it changes the face of homeless presentations and this would be carefully monitored;
- the Council worked closely with housing associations through the housing partnership which was largely focused on allocation but also considered how to assist struggling households. The housing options team was available to help with housing options if the tenancy was at risk in a housing association property; and
- once a site was identified, the Development Team ask for the Council's input in terms of social housing demand. We look at our register and look at the overall demand for different types of housing and if there was a specific need for example accessibility housing, the housing association would be advised.

The Committee thanked the homeless team for their sterling work.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

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

There had been circulated Report No WRSL/020/21 dated 14 October 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, the following responses had been given:-

- Strathpeffer had 43 houses presently being completed, SP2 not allocated but 7 houses in SP3 was acceptable. There was already a planning application for Nutwood and happy for that to go forward;
- Contin, Marybank and Garve content to leave them as growing settlements; and
- the on-line consultation was beneficial as the large number of comments had been the biggest response for a development plan consultation.

The Committee:

- 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;
- 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;
- NOTED** additional supporting documents will accompany the publication of the Proposed Plan, including those outlined in section 3 below;
- 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;
- 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
- AGREED** the approach to consultation outlined in section 7 of this report.

**6. Visitor Management Car Parking and Motorhome Provision
Parcadh Chàraichean Rianachd Luchd-tadhail agus Solar Dhachighean-Motair**

There had been circulated Report No WRSL/021/21 dated 18 October 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, the following responses had been given:-

- a report had been completed for the Plockton Community Council which highlighted where waiting, loading restrictions and traffic management could be implemented throughout the village. Assistance was being given to the community to expand the car parking along the foreshore. A full topographical survey was to be undertaken and this would help the community to bid for funds to increase the car parking capacity along the foreshore;

- the car and motorhome parking issue in the Plockton village would not go away. An invitation to pay for Plockton car park would generate funds and help to prove the case, as was done in Skye, this would give access to match funding from multiple sources.
- there was a lot of work required in Plockton before a new car park could be constructed.
- a site visit had been made to Dornie Hall and this site could be added as a site for an invitation to pay car park, this could be based on discussions with the Dornie Hall Committee.
- not sure if Highland Council managed the Battery Park and Golf Club car parks in Lochcarron. Proposal would be brought forward once these car parks evaluated;
- a Traffic Order for cemeteries was a separate issue and was ongoing, collation of information was being undertaken for all the sites to be included in the Traffic Order and a prohibition on all vehicles with a maximum visit time of two hours unless the vehicle is involved in a service; and
- in relation to Rogie Falls, discussions were being undertaken with forestry management to move this forward. A request had been received from Forestry Management to take over control of the site and to give the option for an Invitation to Pay at this site and hope to have this included in the sites that are charged for.

The Committee:

- AGREED** the locations proposed and to amend and to add to them as appropriate and **AGREED** the immediate delivery of Invitation to Pay at the locations in Item 8.1 with the addition of Dornie Hall and charging to be voluntary at this stage; and
- AGREED** the approach to motorhome parking at sites identified in Section 8.2 of the report.

7. **Skye and Lochalsh Access Forum Appointments** **Cur an Dreuchd Fòram Inntrigidh an Eilein Sgitheanaich is Loch Aillse**

There had been circulated Report No WRSL/022/21 dated 19 October 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

The Committee **AGREED** the appointment of the members of the public who had applied to be members of the Local Access Forum for Skye and Lochalsh as set out in Table 2 of the report.

8. **Use of Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Covid Response Funds** **Cleachdadh Maoin Freagairt Covid Rois an Iar, Shrath Pheofhair is Loch Aillse**

There had been circulated Report No WRSL/023/21 dated 20 October 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer – Communities and Place.

The Committee:

- AGREED** to allocate £10,000 from the remaining Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh (WRSL) Covid19 Ward Discretionary funds to support the provision of play equipment in the WRSL Ward in consultation with amenities staff; and

- ii) **NOTED** that next steps to progress this work will include confirmation of any other funding available, the type of equipment to be installed based on the budget available and consideration of ongoing maintenance associated with any equipment installed. This will involve the amenities team and communities.

9. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

The Committee **NOTED** Minutes of Meeting of the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Committee held on 19 August 2021 and 27 August 2021 which were approved by the Council on 9 September 2021 and 18 October 2021 respectively.

The meeting closed at 11.43 pm.