

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee (Comataidh an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair) held REMOTELY on Monday, 29 November 2021 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr John Finlayson
Mr John Gordon

Mr Calum MacLeod
Mr Calum Munro

Officials in attendance:

Mr A Gunn, Executive Chief Officer, Transformation
Mr W MacKinnon, Ward Manager, Communities and Place
Mr M Bailey, Business Change Team Manager, Transformation
Mr M Crowe, Access Officer (Skye and Lochalsh), Infrastructure, Environment & Economy
Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager

Also in Attendance:

Group Commander Mike Colliar, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (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.

**1. Apologies for Absence
Leisgeulan**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of Interest
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

Item 7 – Mr C Munro (Non- Financial)

**3. Minutes
Geàrr-chunntas**

There had been circulated for information Minutes of Meeting of the Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee (Comataidh an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair) held on 30 August, 2021 (which had been approved at the Highland Council meeting held on 9 September, 2021).

The Committee **NOTED** the terms of Minutes as circulated.

**4. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Local Committee Performance Report
Aithisg Choileanaidh Comataidh Ionadail Seirbheis Smàlaidh agus
Teasairginn na h-Alba**

There had been circulated Report No SR/19/21 by the Local Senior Officer for Highland.

Following a summary of the report by the Group Commander, and in noting the current staffing levels within Stations, there was concern about smaller and more remote stations in particular. In this regard, it was suggested that lowering the current age limit for applications as part of a wider strategy to encourage more young people to come forward might perhaps be advantageous if possible. It was also felt that more local training initiatives, as well as off-Island training, could help in this respect.

With particular reference to Uig, it was hoped that the current position would change favourably as the community developed and there was work ongoing in that regard. As part of this proactive approach, it was also suggested that consideration should be given to any opportunities for cross-staffing with other areas, such as Staffin.

In noting that the Service worked closely with employers to support an improvement in availability, whilst recognising the challenges faced by individuals who had to combine primary employment and operational availability, it was suggested that options should be investigated where available in terms of the provision of enhanced financial payments. Further discussion with employers as to whether increased flexibility could be achieved was also seen as a positive way forward.

Finally, and in light of Scottish Government legislation in relation to future smoke alarm systems within properties, it was confirmed that community engagement was being undertaken at present to highlight these new requirements and also the economic benefits to householders in taking measures now to address these measures.

Having scrutinised the report, and having thanked the Group Commander for his presentation, the Committee otherwise **NOTED** the Area Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Performance Report as circulated.

**5. Skye and Lochalsh Local Access Forum Appointments
Cur an Dreuchd gu Fòram Inntriageadh Ionadail an Eilein Sgitheanaich is
Loch Aillse**

There had been circulated Report No. SR/20/21 by the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy, which detailed the work of the Local Access Forum and sought approval for the appointment of 4 new forum members.

The Committee **APPROVED** the appointment of Ms C McIntyre, Mr A Murray, Mr M Harrison and Ms S Sutton who had all applied to be members of the Local Access Forum for Skye and Lochalsh as set out in Table 2 of the report.

**6. Storr Future Development
Leasachadh an Stòir san Àm ri Teachd**

There had been circulated Report No. SR//21 by the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy, relating to a business case for a retail outlet at the Old Man of Storr.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- this was a really important report which showed the ambition of the area and as such thanks had to be conveyed to the Officers concerned for the substantial work which had been undertaken to date;
- management of the entire site would be needed to ensure sustainability for the future and as such all opportunities had to be taken forward as and when they arose, not least to support the local economy;
- there had to be a focus on all issues in regard to car parking as this could also represent a potential income stream for the local area;
- this work fully supported and enhanced the work already undertaken in relation to the Council's 'Future Highlands – Health & Prosperity Strategic Partnership Plan and the Committee's Skye & Raasay Future proposals which had already been adopted;
- there had already been considerable local interest in this issue and also local investment in advance of future investment/opportunities and this was warmly welcomed;
- it was hoped that the Corporate Resources Committee would support the recommendation within the report which sought approval in regard to the required set up funding to deliver the installation on the retail module at Storr which had the potential to act as a blueprint for the rest of the Highlands;
- this report clearly set out the ambition of the Local Members for the area and it was hoped that it had been read by all local constituents;
- in relation to continuing to develop this world class site wherever possible, there had to be a strong focus on digitisation, not least in terms of the potential for future employment opportunities;
- thanks should be conveyed to the Ward Manager for the extensive work which he had undertaken in relation to this issue;
- this project had the potential to lead the way for all future projects across the Highland area and there was great pride in what had already been achieved;
- this was a world class site with the potential to deliver a world class experience;
- in terms of the timeline for this to be taken forward, it was noted that it was envisaged that a report would be submitted to the Corporate Resources Committee in January but other aspects of this work would start immediately and would be the subject of regular reports to both the Local Committee and Ward Business Meetings; and
- all opportunities for sponsorship (whether at local, Council or national level) should be progressed as a matter of urgency.

Thereafter, the Committee: -

- i **NOTED** the contents of the report;
- ii. **AGREED** to consider investment from disaggregated Ward funds towards the delivery of on-site management and income generation at the Old Man of Storr site, through future Reports to the Isle of Skye and Raasay Area Committee;
- *iii. **AGREED** that a report should be presented to a future Corporate Resources Committee seeking approval of the required set-up funding to deliver the installation on the retail module at Storr;

iv. **NOTED** that further reports would be presented to this Committee in respect of future funding opportunities (as detailed at Section 14) and further development opportunities taking forward the Council's "Future Highlands – Health and Prosperity Strategic Partnership Plan" and this Committee's "Skye & Raasay Future".

**7. Place Based Investment Funds – Proposed Funding Allocations
Maointean Tasgaidh Stèidhichte air Àite – Riarachaidhean Maoineachaidh
gam Moladh**

Declaration of Interest – Mr C Munro declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Council appointed Director of the Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations 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. SR//21 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place relating to proposals for the allocation of Place Based Investment Funds.

During discussion, thanks were conveyed to the Ward Manager for the level of work which had been undertaken in relation to this report.

In that regard, it was highlighted that the proposed allocations would make a huge difference to both local residents and tourists and represented considerable investment in communities at every level.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** the proposed allocation of Place Based Investment Funds as follows:-

- (i) Investment in site management and income generation at the Old Man of Storr - £57,000
- (ii) Investment in Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations, Befriender Scheme to help address social isolation and loneliness - £20,000
- (iii) Investment in Braes Village Hall - £2,000
- (iv) Community Resilience & Support - £7000

The meeting ended at 11.30am.