

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee (Comataidh an Eilein Sgitheanaich agus Ratharsair) held remotely on **Monday, 21 February 2022 at 10.30 am.**

Present:

Mr John Finlayson
Mr John Gordon

Mr Calum MacLeod
Mr Calum Munro

Officials in attendance:

Mr W MacKinnon, Ward Manager, Communities and Place
Mr C Howell, Head of Roads & Infrastructure, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy
Mr G Macdonald, Roads Operations Manager, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy
Mr R MacLeod, Housing Manager, Housing & Property
Ms I MacIver, Housing Investment Officer, Housing & Property
Ms F Cameron, Programme Manager, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy
Ms D MacAllister, Engagement Coordinator, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy
Mr A Webster, Regeneration Team Leader, Infrastructure, Environment & Economy
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Performance & Governance

Also in Attendance:

Area Commander (South) J Valentine, Police Scotland (Item 5 only)

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 J Gordon in the Chair

Preliminaries

The Chairman welcomed Members to this last meeting of the Area Committee for this term of the Council. There were a number of good news stories on the agenda which was testament to all the hard work and vision of local Members and Officers over the last term.

**1. Apologies for Absence
Leisgeulan**

There were no apologies for absence.

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

There were no declarations on interest.

**3. Housing Revenue Account: Garage Rents 2022/23
Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Taigheadais: Màil Gharaidsean 2022/23**

There had been circulated Report No. SR/1/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property which provided information on garage rents for Skye &

Raasay and invited the Committee to set rent levels for garages on the Housing Revenue Account for 2022/2023.

Following consideration, the Committee **AGREED** a 1% rent increase to apply to Skye & Raasay garages.

4. 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 29 November 2021, which were approved at the Highland Council meeting held on 10 December 2021.

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

5. Police Scotland Local Committee Performance Report Aithisg Choileanaidh Comataidh Ionadail Poileas Alba

There had been circulated Report No SR/2/22 by the Area Inspector for Police Scotland which provided an update on the progress with reference to the objectives outlined in the Highland Policing Plan 2020-2023.

In discussion, reference was made to a workshop planned next month to refresh Police engagement with Community Councils following the Covid-19 pandemic. There were Police Officers nominated as contacts for each Community Council in the area and a list of these would be shared with Members so they know who to contact should they receive any queries from Community Councils.

It was advised that the Skye and Lochalsh area were to have 2 additional Officers and it was confirmed there were no planned reductions in staffing numbers in the area at present. Inspector Ross McCartney had recently been promoted and clarification would be provided to Members on staffing changes of local Officers as a result of this.

It would be beneficial to brief local Members confidentially of any significant incidents such as with drugs for awareness purposes. Therefore, an undertaking was given to provide Members with updates of significant crime issues in the local community.

It was advised that the county line drug trade was not a current concern in this area and mainly an issue for the Inverness area. In terms of drugs misuse, enforcement action was not the only option, but also re-engaging with the Drugs and Alcohol Partnership to see what support could be given to people. There was also the option of anonymous reporting and consideration would be given to publicising this more.

Reference was made to recent changes in the Highway code for cyclists and it was queried if anything could be done by the road safety team to raise awareness to motorists of these changes. It was advised that there would be media releases for road users on cycle safety when the weather improved and there was likely to be more cyclists on the road. Also, reference was made to Operation Close Pass where Police Scotland would deploy plain-clothes officers on bikes and drivers who overtake cyclists to closely may be pulled over, provided with advice and if

necessary cautioned for dangerous driving. An undertaking was given to carry out this operation on the Isle of Skye in the summer months.

In terms of road traffic offences, the number of these were still high in the area and anecdotally careless driving was mostly by visitors to the area, while MOT offences tended to be local drivers. Further research on this would be undertaken to see if more driver education was required and an update would be provided in the next performance report.

In terms of road safety, particularly at specific speeding/accident hotspots, road surveys and engaging with the community were measures that would be undertaken to mitigate these issues.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED**:-

- i progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2020-2023 Year 2, attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 1 April, 2021 to 31 December, 2021;
- ii Police contacts would be shared with Members so they know who to contact should they receive any queries from Community Councils;
- iii clarification would be provided to Members on staffing changes of local Officers;
- iv Members would be provided with updates on significant crime issues in the local community;
- v Operation Close Pass would be undertaken on the Isle of Skye in the summer months; and
- vi Further research on road traffic offences would be undertaken to see if more driver education was required and an update would be provided in the next performance report.

6. Area Roads Capital Programme 2022/23 Prògram Calpa Rathaidean na Sgìre 2022/23

There had been circulated Report No.SR/3/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy which provided details of the proposed 2022/23 Area Roads Capital Programme for the Isle of Skye and Raasay Area.

In particular, it was noted that the local allocations of the capital budget for 2022/23 remained to be established and Members hoped there would be a positive budget for this area. Recognition was given to how hard the local Roads team was working in difficult conditions. It was also recognised that through the Scottish Roads Condition Survey, roads in this area were deteriorating. It was recognised that there was not sufficient funding to improve all roads, but there was a need to have a planned approach to road improvements. The roads in the proposed programme were recognised as some of the worst roads needing repair and was supported by Members.

In terms of flexibility in the 2021/22 programme for unplanned urgent work on roads, this could only be done by removing other works in the current programme. A new pothole patcher pro machine would be a great asset for the area in road maintenance and every effort would be made to maximise its use. An update was provided on staffing in the local roads team and it was hoped vacancies could be filled soon, so that there would be a full staffing complement. In relation to white

lining road markings, a pan-Highland contract for white lining to undertake the backlog of road markings across Highland was being looked at.

The Committee **APPROVED** the proposed 2022/23 Area Roads Capital Programme for the Isle of Skye and Raasay Area.

**7. Isle of Skye and Raasay HRA Capital Programme 2022/23
Prògram Calpa Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Taigheadais an Eilein Sgitheanaich
is Ratharsair 2022/23**

There had been circulated Report No. SR/4/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property which contained details of the level of HRA capital resources for Skye and Raasay for 2022-23.

It was highlighted that post April, 2022 there would be significant financial pressures on all tenants with increases in energy costs. It was queried if there was any further funding available for heating replacements. It was advised that due to Covid-19 there was a backlog of projects to be undertaken in the Capital Programme and therefore the budget this year for heating replacements was proposed to be reduced. However, if good progress was made on the backlog, there was flexibility to accelerate from future years work within the Programme and it was hoped that the next Capital Programme would be a 3 or 5 year programme.

Also, it was requested that regular updates be provided to Members with progress on works with environmental improvements. If Members were in agreement this budget could be used towards heating systems, insulation, windows and doors. Guidance was given to tenants on how best to use their heating system and independent heating advice and Welfare support referrals were also available. In addition, the housing team would raise awareness to tenants of any additional grants or funding that was available such as from the Energy Efficient Scotland Programme.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the allocation of resources to Skye & Raasay Area as set out at 5.7;
- ii. **NOTED** the guideline investment priorities as set out in sections 5.2 and 5.3 of the report;
- iii. **AGREED** the proposed one-year HRA Capital Programme for Skye & Raasay 2022-23 as set out in Appendix 1;
- iv. **NOTED** the position relating the current year HRA Capital Programme; and
- v. **NOTED** that updates on the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme would 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.

**8. Highland Coastal Communities Fund – Assessment of Applications
Maoin Choimhearsnachdan Cladaich na Gàidhealtachd – Measadh Iarrtas**

There had been circulated Report No. SR/5/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy which invited Members to consider applications for funding from the Highland Coastal Communities Fund. The Isle of

Skye and Raasay Committee had been awarded £493,223.34 of Crown Estates revenues for distribution.

There were 3 applications for funding and an update on funding requested was provided. In particular, there had been amendments to the proposed amounts to be awarded to the Motorhome Service point and Old Man of Storr projects, in light of additional information received since the papers for the meeting had been issued.

Members expressed support for the applications, as amended, and welcomed this significant additional funding for this area. In terms of the remaining Coastal Communities funding available for this area, it was advised that given applications for funding across Highland were oversubscribed it was intended to engage with communities to refine priorities for the funding and therefore help manage expectations from applicants and to make decision making easier. The Skye and Raasay Futures Plan would be a good basis to focus this community engagement. It was therefore proposed to call for projects towards the end of the Local Government Election period, so that applications could be brought to Local Committees at one of their early meetings in the new Council term.

Following consideration, the Committee **AGREED** to award Highland Coastal Communities Fund funding as follows:-

Camuscross & Duisdale initiative – Motorhome Service point - £34,332.60
Highland Council – Old Man of Storr – Future Development - £77,000.00
Highland Council – Bagging Mower - £13,750.00

9. Place Based Investment Programme Prògram Tasgaidh Stèidhichte air Àite

There had been circulated Report No. SR/6/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy which invited the Committee to consider proposals for the use of Place Based Investment Programme funding. This Committee had been allocated £76,594.

In particular, it was confirmed that the proposals were supported by the Community Planning Partnership and were in line with the Skye and Raasay Futures Plan.

Members supported the proposals in the report and therefore the Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to invest £29,465 in the Broadford Toilet Project;
- ii. **AGREED** to invest £38,297 in further refurbishment works to Portree Community Centre;
- iii. **AGREED** to holding £8,832 as contingency; and
- iv. Grant delegated authority to the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy in consultation with the Area Committee Chair to allocate the contingency as required to approved PBIP beneficiaries in the event that additional investment is required.

10. Skye and Raasay Future Am ri Teachd an Eilein Sgitheanaich is Ratharsair

There had been circulated Report No. SR/7/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy which provided an update on progress being made with the Skye and Raasay Future project.

It was highlighted that the theme of today's meeting was about investment in infrastructure across Skye and Raasay and the role of Skye and Raasay's 'Highlights' document was very significant as it pulled together all the good news stories in terms of investment in the Skye and Raasay area. The importance of a collaborative approach to the project was also highlighted.

The Skye and Raasay Future webpage was a very good resource for the community and showed all the updates on projects and the webpage should be promoted more.

In terms of the Programme Board membership, it was confirmed that local Members would be part of the Board and the Terms of Reference for the Board would be updated to reflect this.

The Committee **NOTED**:

- i. that the current Skye & Raasay Future Storymap and document has been finalised and is available at www.highland.gov.uk/skyeraasay;
- ii. the Terms of Reference for the Programme Board enclosed at Appendix 1, subject to it being amended to include local Members as part of the membership of the Board;
- iii. that partners support the ongoing working arrangements for SARF, the collective responsibility for implementation, and the membership of the Programme Board; and
- iv. the Skye & Raasay 'Highlights' briefing shared at the Committee meeting and would be issued immediately after.

In terms of Standing Order 9, with the consent of Members, the following item had been taken immediately after item 8 on the agenda.

In terms of Standing Order 8, the Chairman agreed to consider the following item as an urgent item of business as Islands Infrastructure funding had to be committed by the end of March, 2022.

11. Islands Infrastructure Fund – Allocation of Funding

There had been circulated Report No. SR/8/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy which invited the Committee to agree recommended projects to receive an award of funding from The Highland Council through the Islands Infrastructure Fund.

Members supported the recommended projects, which was more welcome funding for this area and tied in with the Committee's ambitions in the Skye and Raasay Futures Plan.

The Committee **AGREED** the recommended projects outlined in Appendix 1 and shown below to receive an award of funding from The Highland Council through the Islands Infrastructure Fund as per the individual amounts detailed:-

Kilt Rock Car Park Extension, Isle of Skye - £171,725

Elgol Toilets and Parking, Chemical Waste Unit, Isle of Skye - £48,923

Sleat Community Motorhome Facilities, Sabhal Mor Ostaig, Isle of Skye - £109,992

Road Infrastructure Raasay - £49,360

Valedictory

As this was the last meeting of the Committee prior to the Local Government Election, the Chairman acknowledged that much had been achieved over the last few years, despite the challenges faced by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Chairman highlighted that he would not be standing for re-election and expressed what a privilege it had been to serve the Isle of Skye and Raasay area and working with the Members of the Committee and Officers of the Council.

Members expressed their appreciation to the Chairman for the support he had given them over the last term of the Council and his commitment to the Skye and Raasay area and wished him well for the future.

The meeting ended at 12.15 pm.