

## **The Highland Council Caithness Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the Caithness Committee held remotely on Friday, 1 July 2022 at 10.30am.

### **Present:**

Mr R Bremner  
Mr R Gunn  
Mr A Jarvie  
Mr W MacKay

Mr S Mackie  
Ms J McEwan  
Mr K Rosie

### **Officials in attendance:**

Ms A Clark, Head of Community Support and Engagement, Community and Place  
Mr M Sutherland, Ward Manager, Communities and Place  
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Performance & Governance

Miss J MacLennan in the Chair for Items 1-3.

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

## **Business**

### **1. Apologies for Absence Liesgeulan**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr M Reiss.

### **2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

Item 6ii – Mr R Gunn

Items 6ii & 6iv – Mr S Mackie (Transparency Statement and Declaration of Interest respectively)

### **3. Appointment of Chair of Caithness Committee Cur Cathraiche Chomataidh Ghallaibh an Dreuchd**

Mr R Gunn was nominated by Mr A Jarvie and this was seconded by Ms J McEwan.

There being no further nominations, Mr R Gunn was appointed as Chair of the Committee and took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

### **Point of Order**

Prior to the consideration of items 4 and 5 on the agenda, disappointment was expressed by Mr Mackay that the roles of Provost of Wick and Provost of Thurso were being combined with the position of Vice Chairs. It was contended that these were two different positions and should be recognised as such. Mr MacKay and Mr Mackie had been appointed to these positions during the last session of Council but they had not been able to undertake their civic duties due to the Covid pandemic. It was suggested that Mr MacKay and Mr Mackie be allowed to continue in the roles of

Provost of Wick and Provost of Thurso for the full term of 5 years. If this was agreeable then nominations would be sought for 1 or 2 Vice Chairs to support the Area Chair.

Whilst being sympathetic to these comments, others were of the assumption that the terms of office of Provosts of Wick and Thurso would end at the recent Local Government Election and that the agenda should remain as it was.

Thereafter, Mr S Mackie seconded by Ms J McEwan **MOVED** to continue with the Agenda as published.

Mr W MacKay, seconded by Mr K Rosie, moved as an **AMENDMENT** that the posts of Vice Chair and Provosts, as detailed in items 4 and 5 of the Agenda, be separated and the Provosts elected for Wick and Thurso in the previous Council continue.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** was carried by 4 votes to 3, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:-

**For the Motion:**

Mr R Gunn; Mr A Jarvie; Mr S Mackie; Ms J McEwan

**For the Amendment:**

Mr R Bremner; Mr W MacKay; Mr K Rosie.

**4. Appointment of Vice-Chair and Provost of Thurso**

Mr S Mackie was nominated by Mr R Gunn and this was seconded by Ms J McEwan.

Mr K Rosie was nominated by Mr R Bremner and this was seconded by Mr W MacKay.

On a vote between the two candidates, Mr S Mackie received 4 votes and Mr K Rosie received 3 votes and there were no abstentions.

The Committee therefore **AGREED** that Mr S Mackie be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Committee and Provost of Thurso, the votes having been cast as follows:-

**Votes for Mr S Mackie**

Mr R Gunn; Mr A Jarvie; Mr S Mackie; Ms J McEwan

**Votes for Mr K Rosie**

Mr R Bremner; Mr W MacKay; Mr K Rosie.

**5. Appointment of Vice-Chair and Provost of Wick**

Ms J McEwan was nominated by Mr A Jarvie and this was seconded by Mr S Mackie.

Mr W Mackay was nominated by Mr R Bremner and this was seconded by Mr K Rosie.

In a vote between the two candidates, Ms J McEwan received 4 votes and Mr W Mackay received 3 votes and there were no abstentions.

The Committee therefore **AGREED** that Ms J McEwan be appointed as Vice- Chair of the Committee and Provost of Wick, the votes having been cast as follows:-

**Votes for Ms J McEwan**

Mr R Gunn; Mr A Jarvie; Mr S Mackie; Ms J McEwan

**Votes for Mr W MacKay**

Mr R Bremner; Mr W MacKay; Mr K Rosie.

**6. Member Appointments**

**Cur Bhall an Dreuchd**

**i. Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership – Advisory Board**

**Com-pàirteachas Ath-bheothachaidh Ghallaibh agus Chataibh a Tuath – Bòrd Comhairleachaidh**

The Committee had been asked to appoint 2 members to serve on the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership Advisory Board.

Mr R Bremner was nominated by Mr S Mackie and this was seconded by Mr R Gunn.

Mr M Reiss was nominated by Mr S Mackie and this was seconded by Ms J McEwan.

On there being no other nominations, the Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr R Bremner and Mr M Reiss to the Advisory Board of the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership.

**ii. Dounreay Stakeholders Group  
Buidheann Luchd-ùidh Dhùnraath**

**Transparency Statements – Mr S Mackie and Mr R Gunn made Transparency Statements as Chair and member of Dounreay Stakeholders Group respectively. However, having applied the objective test, they did not consider they had to declare an interest and would therefore would stay and take part in this item.**

Members were advised that the primary purpose of the Dounreay Stakeholders Group was to be the main interface between the community, the site operator at Dounreay and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) in areas such as programme delivery, safety, environment and security and to play an important role in the economic regeneration of the area. It was part of a network of site stakeholder groups across the United Kingdom with each site group represented at meetings of a national stakeholder group set up by the NDA.

The Council was required to appoint 4 Members to the Dounreay Stakeholders Group comprising 3 Members from the Caithness area and 1 Member from the Sutherland area.

Mr W MacKay was nominated by Mr A Jarvie and this was seconded by Mr R Bremner.

Mr K Rosie was nominated by Mr S Mackie and seconded by Mr R Bremner.

Mr A Jarvie was nominated by Ms J McEwan and this was seconded by Mr R Bremner.

On there being no other nominations, the Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr W MacKay, Mr K Rosie and Mr A Jarvie to the Dounreay Stakeholders Group.

iii. **Caithness & North Sutherland Fund  
Maoin Ghallaibh & Chataibh a Tuath**

Members were advised that the Caithness & North Sutherland Fund was established by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd to distribute funding to community organisations for projects that would increase the attractiveness of Caithness and North Sutherland as a place to live, work and invest with particular emphasis on achieving environment, social, culture and infrastructure improvements.

The Fund required 3 Members to be appointed – 2 Members from the Caithness Wards and 1 Member from the North West & Central Sutherland Ward.

Mr W MacKay was nominated by Mr S Mackie and seconded by Mr R Bremner.

Mr M Reiss was nominated by Mr S Mackie and seconded by Mr R Gunn.

On there being no other nominations, the Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr W MacKay and Mr M Reiss to the Caithness and North Sutherland Fund.

iv. **Caithness Citizen's Advice Bureau – Board  
Biùro Comhairleachaidh Pobaill Ghallaibh – Bòrd**

**Declaration of Interest - Mr S Mackie declared an interest in this item as a Director of Caithness Citizen's Advice Bureau and removed himself from consideration for this position.**

The Committee was asked to appoint 1 Member to serve as a Director of Caithness Citizens' Advice Bureau.

Ms J McEwan was nominated by Mr R Bremner and seconded by Mr K Rosie.

On there being no other nominations, the Committee **AGREED** to appoint Ms J McEwan to the Caithness Citizen's Advice Bureau.

v. **Caithness Local Access Forum  
Fòram Cothrom Ionadail Ghallaibh**

The Council had a statutory duty under Section 25 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 to establish Local Access Forums for its area. There were currently six Local Access Forums in the Highland area which advised on matters in relation to the exercise of access rights, the existence of delineation of rights of way or the drawing up and adoption of the Core Path Plan. In addition, they also offered and gave assistance to parties in terms of the resolution of any disputes in this respect. The Committee were asked to appoint 2 Members to the Caithness Local Access Forum.

Mr K Rosie was nominated by Mr S Mackie and seconded by Ms J McEwan.

Mr A Jarvie was nominated by Ms J McEwan and seconded by Mr R Gunn.

On there being no other nominations, the Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr K Rosie and Mr A Jarvie to the Caithness Local Access Forum.

**vi. Chair of Caithness Poverty Action Group**

The Committee was asked to appoint 1 Member as Chair of Caithness Poverty Action Group.

Mr R Bremner was nominated by Mr K Rosie and seconded by Mr W MacKay.

Mr A Jarvie was nominated by Ms J McEwan and seconded by Mr R Gunn.

*At this point, the meeting was adjourned for a short period to resolve IT connectivity issues and the meeting resumed at 11.25 a.m.*

In a vote between the two candidates, Mr R Bremner received 3 votes and Mr A Jarvie received 3 votes and there were no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:-

**Votes for Mr Bremner**

Mr R Bremner; Mr W MacKay; Mr K Rosie

**Votes for Mr A Jarvie**

Mr R Gunn; Mr A Jarvie; Ms J McEwan

On there being an equal number of votes cast, lots were drawn and **Mr A Jarvie** was appointed as Chair of Caithness Poverty Action Group.

**vi. Your Police, You Decide Steering Group (Caithness)**

The Committee was asked to appoint 1 Member to the Steering Group.

Mr W MacKay was nominated by Mr R Bremner and seconded by Mr R Gunn.

On there being no other nominations, the Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr W MacKay to the Your Police, You Decide Steering Group (Caithness).

In this regard, reference was made that there might be other Member appointments that needed to be filled. It was suggested that if there were such Boards/Organisations where returning Elected Members had previously been appointed to then they continue to attend these meetings in the interim. Formal appointments would be made at the next Caithness Area Committee.

The meeting ended at 11.35 a.m