

**The Highland Council  
Sutherland County Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the Sutherland County Committee held remotely on Monday 15 August 2022 at 10.30am.

**Present:**

Mr M Baird  
Mr R Gale  
Ms M Hutchison

Mr J McGillivray  
Ms L A Niven

**Officials in attendance:**

Mr P Tomalin, Ward Manager, Communities and Place  
Ms J Sutherland, Roads Operations Manager, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy  
Ms F MacBain, Committee Administrator, Performance and Governance

**Also in Attendance:**

Chief Inspector S Macdonald and Inspector C Murray, Police Scotland

**Mr R Gale in the Chair**

**1. Apologies for Absence  
Leisgeulan**

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Mr H Morrison.

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

Item 9 (recommendation 5 only) - Mr J McGillivray

**3. Appointment of Chair  
Cur Cathraiche an Dreuchd**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr R Gale as Chair.

**4. Appointment of Vice Chair  
Cur Iar-Chathraiche an Dreuchd**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr H Morrison as Vice Chair (subject to his acceptance of the position)

**5. 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 Council was required to appoint 3 Members to serve on the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership Advisory Board. In this regard, it was confirmed that 2 Members should come from the Caithness Wards and 1 Member from the North West Sutherland Ward.

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint **Ms M Hutchison**.

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

The primary purpose of the Dounreay Stakeholder 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.

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint **Mr M Baird** as detailed.

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

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 and Central Sutherland Ward.

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint **Mr H Morrison**, (subject to his acceptance of the position).

iv. **Sutherland Local Access Forum**  
**Fòram Intriageadh Ionadail Chataibh**

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 **AGREED** to appoint **Mr J McGillivray** and **Ms L A Niven** to serve on the Local Access Forum.

v. **Sutherland Sports Council**

## **Comhairle Spòrs Chataibh**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint **Mr J McGillivray** and **Ms M Hutchison** to serve on the Sutherland Sports Council

**vi. Trustees of Recreational Ground in Royal Burgh of Dornoch  
Urrasairean Talamh Cluiche ann am Baile Rìoghail Dhòrnaich**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint **Mr J McGillivray** as a Trustee of Recreational Ground in Royal Burgh of Dornoch.

**vii. East and Central Sutherland Citizen's Advice Bureau  
Biùro Comhairleachadh a' Phobail airson Chataibh an Ear agus  
Meadhan Chataibh**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint **Ms L A Niven** and **Mr M Baird** to serve on the East and Central Sutherland Citizen's Advice Bureau.

**viii. North West Sutherland Citizen's Advice Bureau  
Biùro Comhairleachadh a' Phobail airson Chataibh an Iar-thuath**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint **Ms M Hutchison** to serve on the North West Sutherland Citizen's Advice Bureau.

**6. Police – Area Performance Summary  
Poileas – Geàrr-chunntas air Coileanadh Sgìreil**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/10/22 by the North Area Commander.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- Police officers were thanked for their work;
- information was sought and provided on the rates of drink versus drugs driving offences, with drugs being more prevalent but this was aided by the roll out of the use of drug wipes to detect usage. Information was provided on the procedures for undertaking drug searches;
- assurance was sought and provided about police officer cover for prevention and detection based in Caithness but covering a wider area, which was welcomed; and
- Ms L A Niven requested information on County Lines, which would be provided outwith the meeting.

The Committee **NOTED** the progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2020-2023, for the period covering 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022.

**7. Community Asset Transfer – Migdale Playing Field  
Glusad So-mhaoin Coimhearsnachd – Raon-cluiche Mhigein**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/11/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place.

The Committee **APPROVED** the following Community Asset Transfer:-

The lease of Migdale Playing Field, Bonar Bridge to Bonar Bridge Football Club for 25 years at rental of £1p.a. on the terms set out at section 2.1 of the report.

## 8. **Roads - Winter Service Plan 2022/23** **Rathaidean – Plana Seirbheis Geamhraidh 2022/23**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/12/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

During discussion, the following issues were raised;

- information was sought and provided on responsibility for pavements on the A9, which lay with Bear Scotland;
- it was confirmed that several small pavement tractors were available in various depots around the wards. Gritting started at 6am and it was intended for all primary routes to be gritted by 8.30am. Pre-gritting generally took place between 5pm and 9pm. There was a link on the Council's website for communities to apply for community resilience equipment, such as grit bins, shovels and visibility vests;
- work was being undertaken to fill the various vacancies in the service and applications from female candidates were being encouraged as females were under-represented; and
- the service was commended for its response times to queries.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Winter Service Plan for 2022/23 and **NOTED** that Covid-19 and driver's hours regulations would potentially have an impact on the winter service provided.

## 9. **Dornoch Common Good Quarterly Monitoring Report** **Aithisg Sgrùdaidh Ràitheil Math Coitcheann Dhòrnaich**

**Declaration of Interest: Mr J McGillivray declared an interest in Recommendation 5 of this item as a Director of the Dornoch Area Community Interest Company for the Dornoch BID project and he left the meeting during discussion and decision of that application.**

There had been circulated Report No SCC/13/22 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place and Executive Chief Officer Finance and Resources.

The Committee discussed recommendations 1 to 4, and 6 initially, then considered recommendation 5 once Mr J McGillivray had left the meeting.

The Committee:-

- i **NOTED** the position of Dornoch Common Good fund at the end of the first quarter FY 22/23;
- ii **NOTED** the update on current Dornoch Common Good issues;
- iii **AGREED** to delegate to the Ward Manager power to approve expenditure up to £10,000 in relation to Dornoch Common Good within the annually set budget and following consultation with relevant Ward Members. This delegated power will be reviewed annually as part of the budget setting process;
- iv **AGREED** to homologate community grants totalling £9,921.76 awarded in the current Financial Year;
- v **APPROVED** a grant of £9,999 to Dornoch Area Community Interest Company for the Dornoch BID project, subject to match funding being in place; and

vi **APPROVED** a grant of £1835.60 to Dornoch Area Community Council for the Asset Maintenance & Improvement Projects (Phase 5) project.

**10. Ward budget grants**  
**Tabhartasan Buidseat Uàird**

**North, West and Central Sutherland Ward Discretionary Budget applications approved since 1 April 2022**

The Committee **NOTED** that the following North, West and Central Sutherland Ward Discretionary Budget applications have been approved since 1 April 2022:

Loch Shin Sailing Club: Sailing Equipment – £1,155.00  
Naver Telecentre Centre: Service Development and Community Outreach – £1,528.00

North West Training Centre: Adult Learning Programme 2022-2023 – £1,500.00  
Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust: Sutherland Wellbeing Promotional Plan – £415.00

**East Sutherland and Edderton Ward Discretionary Budget applications approved since 1 April 2022**

The Committee is asked to note that the following East Sutherland and Edderton Ward Discretionary Budget applications have been approved since 1 April 2022:

Clyne Heritage Society: Greeanan Community Archaeological Excavation – £2,500.00

Highland Historic Buildings Trust: Easter Ross Churches Trail – £350.00

Kyle of Sutherland Development Trust: Sutherland Wellbeing Promotional Plan – £415.00

Highlife Highland: Youth Zone Summer Activities, Holiday Hunger & Safe Space Drop Ins – £2,900.00

**11. Minutes**  
**Geàrr-chunntas**

There had been circulated and were **NOTED** Minutes of the Sutherland County Committee held on 28 February 2022, which had been approved by the Council on 10 March 2022.

Prior to closing the meeting, the Committee **AGREED** they would prefer future meetings to be held in person, with a hybrid option to allow the use of MS Teams and / or Bluejeans videoconferencing.

The meeting ended at 11.40am.