

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Committee** held remotely on 8 November 2022 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mrs I Campbell
Dr C Birt

Mrs E Kraft
Mr P Logue

In attendance:

Mr W MacKinnon, Ward Manager, Communities and Place
Ms J Wileman, Assistant Ward Manager, Communities and Place
Mr R MacLeod, Housing Manager, Housing and Property Service
Mr P Waite, Principal Planner, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy
Mr T Stott, Principal Planner, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy
Ms J Bain, Planner, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Corporate Governance
Ms R Ross, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Governance

Also in attendance:

Mr B Liversedge, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Mr M Colliar, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Ms S Walker, Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust

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

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

The Committee **NOTED** the following Transparency Statement:-

Item 9 – Mr P Logue

3. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

There had been circulated the Minutes of Meeting of the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Committee held on 28 August 2022 which had been approved by the Council on 22 September 2022.

The Committee **NOTED** the minutes.

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

There had been circulated Report No WRSL/012/22 dated 26 October 2022 together with the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Performance Report by the Local Group Commander for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

During discussion the following issues were raised:-

- it was suggested that Transport Scotland be encouraged to introduce signage to warn drivers of an adverse camber on a corner in Glensheil to help reduce the number of car accidents occurring in that location,
- Members were encouraged to speak with individuals in their communities to promote joining the SFRS;
- in response to a query about fire prevention and awareness, it was confirmed that the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) have worked in partnership with the Woodland Trust and other agencies on issues such as wildfires and that they have engaged heavily with schools and community groups;
- responding to a query about the roll out of new compulsory fire alarms in homes the Committee were reassured that, while this was proving a slow process, SFRS were focussing on insuring that the most vulnerable people were getting alarms fitted; and
- it was hoped that sprinkler systems, while difficult to retrofit to existing properties, would eventually be required in new homes.

**5. Housing Performance Report
Aithisg Dèanadais a thaobh Taigheadais**

There had been circulated Report No WRSL/013/22 dated 8 November 2022 by the Executive Chief Officer – Property and Housing which provided 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 2022.

During discussion the following issues were raised:-

- ideally tenants should first be referred to the appropriate Housing Management Officer to seek help with rent arrears and council tax debts and, if non- council tenants had problems with rent arrears, they should be referred to the Housing Options team;
- evictions were a last resort and the actions taken following this were very much dependent on individual circumstances, and
- the Highland Council and Housing Associations shared a common housing register and were in regular contact regarding supporting homeless people and attended regular partnership meetings.

The Committee, having considered the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022, **NOTED** the report.

6. WRS� Access Rangers Presentation

Following a presentation from the Principal Planner on behalf of the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Access Rangers the following issues were raised:-

- concerns were raised about the amount of outdoor toileting reported in the Lochalsh area and it was suggested that more comfort schemes could be used to tackle this issue;
- in response to a question about car parking, it was stated that the information collected would be used to decide where to implement 'invitation to pay' carparks, and
- concerns were raised about false information being shared by campervan companies and on apps and the Committee were reassured that Rangers would be working over the winter to research apps and websites and ensure the information they provided was correct

The Committee **NOTED** the presentation and **AGREED** that further information concerning visitor numbers in the Strathpeffer area of the ward be circulated to the Committee.

7. Lochalsh Collaboration Development Plan Presentation. Taisbeanadh Plana Leasachaidh Co-obrachadh Loch Aillse

Following a presentation on the Lochalsh Collaboration Development Plan, the following issues were raised:-

- the phenomenal work achieved by Kyle and Lochalsh Community Trust was commended;
- some local people were not able to afford to live in the area and the Highland Council's Housing policy needed to reflect that affordable housing was built near existing services,
- there was no climate-change specific question included in the Lochalsh Collaboration's questionnaire so the responses did not necessarily reflect a lack of awareness about climate change;
- it was suggested that higher numbers of reported mental ill health among young people could be due to differing definitions of good or bad mental health across generations but could also be due to pressures such as seasonal working and lack of access to housing disproportionately affecting younger people;
- the importance of community transport was highlighted as was the difference between public transport and community transport;
- disappointment was expressed at the lack of sporting activities available, particularly for girls,
- the lack of opportunities for people using a plus one card was highlighted,
- attention was drawn to the lack of non-sports-based activities available for secondary school aged children; and

- attention was drawn to the need for safe cycling and walking routes between towns and villages,

The Committee **NOTED** the presentation.

**8. Member Appointments
Cur Bhall an Dreuchd**

**Ross and Cromarty Local Access Forum
Fòram Inntreigeadh Ionadail Rois agus Chromba**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Dr C Birt to the Ross and Cromarty Local Access Forum.

**9. Ward Discretionary Budget
Buidseat fo Ùghdarras Uàird**

Transparency Statement: Mr P Logue made a Transparency Statement in as a close family member involved with Balmacara Community Trust. However, having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest to declare.

The Committee **NOTED** that the following Ward Discretionary Fund applications have been approved since 1 April 2022:-

Ward 5

Contin Community Council - Transport for Elections in May 2022 - **£250**

CALA Integrated Services - Development of school aged childcare in Ullapool - **£2,700**

Headway Highland - Support vulnerable adults with an acquired brain injury (ABI) and families in the Highlands (Multi-ward grant All 21 Wards) - **£71.43**

Lochalsh Community Council - Local Planted Barrels - **£445**

Wester Loch Ewe Community Council - Improving WLECC area - **£1,047**

Auchtertyre Primary School Parent Council - Installation of equipment at Auchtertyre Primary School - **£1,300**

Balmacara Community Trust - Balmacara Gala - **£510**

Drumbuie Common Grazing - Drumbuie Bus Shelter - **£450**

Lady Haig Poppy Wreaths - 5 Wreaths at £32.40 each plus £12 carrier fee - **£174**

**10. Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan 2
Plana Leasachaidh Ionadail 2 ga Mholadh airson Linne Mhoireibh A-staigh**

There had been circulated Report No WRSL/014/22 dated 8 November 2022 by Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

In discussion, the land allocated for housing in Strathpeffer was welcomed.

The Committee:

- i. **NOTED** the issues raised in representations received on the Proposed Plan as they related to place-specific matters within this Committee area and **AGREED** the recommended Council response to these issues as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- ii. **AUTHORISED** officers to undertake the statutory and other procedures required to submit the Plan to Scottish Ministers and to progress the Plan through its Examination up to but excluding the Plan's adoption; and
- iii. **AUTHORISED** the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy, in consultation with the chair of this Committee, to make any necessary factual or other non-material changes to the place-specific elements of Appendix 1 of the report prior to its submission to Scottish Government.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm