

1. It is well known that voluntary, charitable and youth organisations are struggling with the reduction in funding that they are all experiencing, and this is made significantly more difficult with the level of letting fees for council premises that are being levied on such organisations.

Many of these organisations make a significant contribution to the mental welfare of our young people and this is particularly important in the wake of the Covid pandemic.

In addition, other such organisations provide vital childcare and after school clubs and activities for the children of working parents.

The level of letting fees is threatening the very existence of such organisations and if they have to close and withdraw their services the knock-on effect for children's mental health and the ability for working parents to continue to work is considerable, with the added impact on the local economies that will ensue.

That being the case this Council will review the letting charges for all such organisations and introduce a reduction in letting fees of 50% for all charitable and voluntary organisations.

By doing this we will ensure that the invaluable services that they provide across Highland will continue to the benefit of all communities.

Signed Mr R Gale Mr J McGillivray Mr A Graham Ms J McEwan

S95 officer assessment of financial implications.

This motion is anticipated to have a financial implication to the Council. In the budget agreed by the Council in March 2022, the Council agreed budget saving reference P&H/13 'School and Property Lets – Developing a Sustainable, Commercial Lets Service' totalling £0.200m across 2022/23 and 2023/24. The motion would be expected to financially impact and reduce the level of letting income achieved and the delivery of this budget saving.

2. The positive impact of the NC500 around the Highlands has been manyfold, however, with the positive impact on the economy of the Highlands comes the negative impact on services and amenities across the area.

Last year the Council waste collection services innovatively introduced a flexible and additional bin collection scheme which made a significant difference to the levels of waste that was abandoned in some of the most scenic parts of the Highlands.

Local communities have commented on what a positive difference this initiative made around the NC500 route.

That being the case this Council will put a similar project in place for the coming season to ensure that we make the NC500 route memorable for all the right reasons for the traveling visitors. In addition, this will also be welcomed by the local communities along the route who do not want to be faced with uncontrolled waste abandoned indiscriminately by the roadside.

Signed Mr R Gale Mr M Baird Mrs McEwan Mrs A MacLean

S95 officer assessment of financial implications.

This motion is anticipated to have a financial implication for the Council. There is no current provision within the revenue budget for this service, and as a result additional funding would have to be identified to fund the service proposed, or decisions made on savings/reductions/deferrals of other current service activity to provide capacity for what is proposed.

3. Disposable Vapes

Around 1.3million disposable vapes are thrown away in the UK each week, representing around 10 tonnes of lithium, the valuable resource crucial for electric car batteries, creating a new litter hazard across our streets and countryside, and contributing to extra plastic and toxic chemical pollution in land and sea. The Fire Brigade suggests that disposable vape batteries could have been responsible for the fire at the recycling depot in Aberdeenshire recently, and they have also been implicated in fires in bin lorries. E-cigarette use among teenagers doubled last year, creating a whole new generation of young people hooked on nicotine, with no societal benefit.

Highland Council therefore agrees to support the campaign by the Marine Conservation Society, Ash Scotland and Keep Scotland Beautiful to ban the manufacture and sale of disposable vapes in Scotland, and asks the Leader to join with other Councils in Scotland in writing to the First Minister welcoming the review into disposable vapes and to note Highland Council's support for a ban.

Signed Mr C Ballance Mr A Baldrey Mr C Birt Mr A MacDonald Ms L Johnston

S95 officer assessment of financial implications.

This motion is not anticipated to have any financial implication to the Council.

4. Wave Trust

Highland Council supports the Wave Trust's 70/30 campaign to reduce child abuse, neglect and other adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) by at least 70% by the year 2030. Council asks officers to bring a report to a future meeting of this Council on how the ambitions of this campaign can best be achieved in Highland.

Further Highland Council considers that;-

Increased awareness of the impact of ACEs is key to driving investment in initiatives that promote safe, stable and nurturing relationships and environments which can have a positive impact on a broad range of challenges and on the development of skills that will help children and young people reach their full potential and it urges all

concerned to use ACE awareness to have a positive impact on both individuals and society as a whole and it supports all teaching staff, pupils support assistants and early years practitioners to be encouraged to take up opportunities for continued professional learning sessions on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Signed Mr A Baldrey Mr R MacKintosh

S95 officer assessment of financial implications.

This motion is not anticipated to have any financial implication to the Council, other than officer time to prepare the report requested, which could displace or have an impact on other scheduled officer activity. Any further actions, and associated implications arising from a report to be produced per the motion, would need assessed at that time and a view cannot be given now. With regard to staff opportunities for continued professional learning in ACEs, the Council has already committed to being a Trauma Informed Council and implementing Trauma Informed Practice across Council Services. Staff learning regarding ACEs is being progressed through that Trauma Informed approach, and through existing training and associated budgets.

5. Voting rights of religious representatives on the Education Committee

New research shows a sharp decline in religious identity. Around 1 million less Scots now identify with Christian groups compared to 2011, when 53% of Scots identified with a Christian religion. That figure has now dropped to 33%.

Given these findings it seems bewildering that we allow unelected religious representatives the ability to vote on the education committee. Fundamentally no one who is unaccountable to the electorate should be able to vote on public policy and it's clear that decisions relating to education should be done on a democratic basis by people who are held to account by the electorate. Faith groups who wish to participate in discussions relating to local education may still do so in the same manner as any other interested local community group.

Currently the Council is required under the terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to have three religious representatives on any committee established by the Council to discharge their responsibilities as an education authority.

There is no legal requirement however for these representatives to have a vote. The Scottish Government has clarified that "voting rights on committees are a matter for each authority."

In line with the above clarification statement by the Scottish Government, Highland Council agrees that only elected members of the Council with a mandate from the electorate should have a vote on the Education Committee.

Signed Mr R MacKintosh Ms K Willis

S95 officer assessment of financial implications.

This motion is not anticipated to have any financial implication to the Council.

6. The Council Agrees that the creation of Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) will have a devastating impact on our island and coastal communities, which rely heavily on fishing and other marine-related activities for their livelihoods. Notes its strong opposition to the creation of HPMAs and urges the Scottish Government not to impose them where it is against the stated will of these communities. Notes that Local engagement and collaboration should be the way forward to Enhance the management of marine areas calling on the wealth of valuable local knowledge and inherited expertise of island and coastal stakeholders. Therefore, this Council agrees that a letter is to be sent to the Scottish Government expressing our opposition to the introduction of this HPMA scheme and urging them to work with our local communities to find alternative solutions that protect our marine environment without compromising the livelihood, language, and culture of our remote, rural, island, and coastal communities and avoid the depopulation of rural areas via job loss & irreversible damage to the local economy.

Signed Mr R Stewart Mrs B Jarvie

S95 officer assessment of financial implications.

This motion is not anticipated to have any financial implication to the Council