

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee** held in the **Courtroom, Grantown Courthouse, Grantown-on-Spey/Remotely** on 21 August 2023 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr J Bruce

Mr R Jones

Mrs M Cockburn

Mr B Lobban

In attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager

Mr S Manning, Principal Traffic Officer

Mr C Irvine, Community Works Officer

Mr G Kennedy, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure and Environment

Ms D Sutton, Amenity Services Manager

Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

Also in attendance:

Inspector C Johnstone, Police Scotland

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 R Jones in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt/ Aithris Fhollaiseachd

There were no Declarations of Interest or Transparency Statements.

3. Recess Powers Cumhachdan Fosaìdh

The Committee **NOTED** that the recess powers granted by the Council at its meeting on 29 June 2023 had not required to be exercised in relation to the business of the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee.

4. Police Area Performance Report Poileas – Geàrr-chunntas air Coileanadh Sgìreil

There had been circulated report No BSAC/12/23 by the Area Commander, Police Scotland.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- concerns were raised about the road resurfacing works in the Badenoch and Strathspey area due to take place in the lead up to Thunder in the Glens as large numbers of powerful motorbikes driving over a newly resurfaced road would constitute a significant safety risk. Inspector Johnstone undertook to write to the Committee Chair highlighting the risk and calling for the works to be delayed. It was confirmed that the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment had been made aware of Members' concerns surrounding the proposed resurfacing;
- in response to a question it was confirmed that there were no plans to close Aviemore Police Station and it would continue to be manned 24 hours a day.
- on the point being raised it was confirmed that a Staff Restructuring Programme was taking place across the Highlands and the role of Station Officers was being reviewed. Staff levels were good in Badenoch and Strathspey but since levels were lower elsewhere the problem of staff from Badenoch and Strathspey being used to help cover shortages in other areas was likely to continue;
- in response to a question it was confirmed that drug prevention talks would be continuing in High Schools and work would start on delivering age-specific talks at Primary Schools;
- the work being done to combat speeding and dangerous driving in the area was making local people feel safer;
- the increase in sexual crimes may have been a result of the work being done nationally to provide safe spaces and support to people reporting these crimes;
- information was sought and provided on what happened when cars were abandoned in fields after going off the road; and
- it was queried if there were any possible solutions being considered to decrease the gridlock occurring in towns and villages as a result of diversions being put in place due to accidents on the A9.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2020-2023 Year 3, attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2023; and
- AGREED** that the Chair would write to Police Scotland highlighting the Committee's concerns around the possible loss of Station officers in the area.

5. **Winter Service Plan 2023/24** **Plana Seirbheis Geamhraidh airson 2023/24**

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/13/23 dated 12 July 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- on the point being raised, it was confirmed that the scale of the map showing the routes to be gritted would be increased to show greater detail of gritting routes within towns and villages as well as pavement gritting routes;
- communication needed to be improved in relation to streets that were unable to be gritted due to obstacles such as parked cars;
- it was suggested that information about gritting routes should be displayed in public places;

- in response to a question, it was confirmed that all grit boxes would be filled in advance of the colder weather. However, it was added that the filling of grit boxes and the gritting of roads were the responsibility of the same staff and the gritting of roads needed to be prioritised meaning that some grit boxes may not be able to be refilled immediately once emptied;
- in response to a question it was confirmed that there were the same number of gritter drivers available as last year; and
- further discussion took place surrounding the resurfacing works discussed under item 4, during which it was confirmed that these works had already begun. Members' reiterated their concerns regarding the safety risks associated with these works as well as the disruption that would be caused to the area's biggest tourist event. The Community Works Officer confirmed that these works would be suspended immediately which was unanimously supported by Members.

The Committee:-

- APPROVED** the Winter Service Plan for 2023/24 subject to the scale of the route map being increased and for a plan showing pavement gritting routes to be included;
- NOTED** the decision of officers to immediately suspend all surface dressing/resurfacing works in the Badenoch and Strathspey area until after the end of the Thunder in the Glens event on 25-27 August 2023.

6. **Ward Discretionary Budget** **Buidseat Fo Ùghdarras Uàird**

The Committee **NOTED** that no Ward Discretionary Fund applications had been approved since the previous Committee meeting on 29 May 2023.

7. **Badenoch & Strathspey Repurposing COVID-19 Fund** **Maoin Ath-adhbharachaidh COVID-19 Bhàideanach & Shrath Spè**

There had been circulated Report No BSAC/14/23 dated 26 July 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place.

During discussion, disappointment was expressed over the lack of funding for playparks in Newtonmore and information was sought, and provided, on developments concerning the playpark in Aviemore.

The Committee **AGREED** the repurposing of the following COVID-19 funds:-

- Play Area Improvements within Badenoch and Strathspey - £3,600

8. **Minutes** **Geàrr-chunntas**

There had been circulated, and were **NOTED**, Minutes of Meeting of the Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee held on 29 May 2023 which had been approved by the Council on 29 June 2023.

It was highlighted that the Cairngorm National Park Authority had been wrongly named in the minutes of the previous meeting and it was confirmed that this would be rectified in future minutes.

**9. Traffic Regulation Orders – Glenmore (Parking Enforcement)
Òrdughan Riaghladh Trafaig – An Gleann Mòr (Co-èigneachadh Parcaidh)**

The Order was following the Statutory Consultation Process. The initial proposals for the Order had been shared with stakeholders and Elected Members in June 2023. Feedback subsequently received had resulted in amendments, where possible, to the initial proposals. The Final Draft Order had been issued for public consultation week beginning 14 August 2023, seeking formal objections by Wednesday 13 September 2023.

Post Consultation, officers would consider formal objections received and would attempt to resolve these objections directly with objectors. Any objections which could not be resolved would be presented to Members at a future Committee to agree the next course of action.

During discussion, in response to a comment that it was the responsibility of the landowner to provide additional parking, it was confirmed that Forestry and Land Scotland was actively pursuing the possibility of using the Hayfield for overflow parking.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

**10. Traffic Regulation Orders – Glenmore (Speed Limits)
Òrdughan Riaghladh Trafaig – An Gleann Mòr (Cuingalachaidhean Astair)**

The proposed speed limit restrictions Order was following the Statutory Consultation Process. The initial proposals for the Order had been shared with stakeholders and Elected Members in June 2023. Feedback subsequently received had resulted in amendments, where possible, to the initial proposals.

The Final Draft Order was due to be issued for public consultation week beginning 14 August 2023, seeking formal objections by Wednesday 13 September 2023. Post Consultation, officers would consider formal objections received and would attempt to resolve these objections directly with objectors. Any objections which could not be resolved would be presented to Members at a future Committee to agree the next course of action.

During discussion, the simplification of speed limits by reducing the number of different speed limit zones was welcomed.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

The meeting concluded at 11.35 am.