

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Economy and Infrastructure Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday, 2 May 2024 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr M Baird	Mr W MacKay (remote)
Mr I Brown	Mrs A MacLean (substitute)
Mr J Bruce (remote)	Mr D Macpherson
Mr M Cameron	Mr H Morrison (remote)
Mrs I Campbell (substitute)	Ms L Niven (remote)
Mr K Gowans	Mrs T Robertson
Mr M Green	Mr R Stewart (remote)
Mr R Jones	Ms M Smith
Mr P Logue (remote)	Ms K Willis (remote)

Non-Members also present:

Ms S Atkin	Mr D Louden
Mr J Finlayson (remote)	Mr T MacLennan (remote)
Mr L Fraser	Mr J McGillivray(remote)
Ms M Hutchison (remote)	Mr D Millar(remote)
Ms B Jarvie (remote)	Mr C Munro(remote)
Mr S Kennedy	Mrs M Ross (remote)
Mr B Lobban	

Officials in Attendance:

Mr M MacLeod, Assistant Chief Executive - Place
Mr A Maguire, Head of Development and Regeneration
Ms T Urry, Head of Roads and Transport
Ms N Wallace, Service Lead, Environment, Development and Active Travel
Mr McCann, Economy & Regeneration Manager
Ms F Cameron, Programme Manager
Ms L MacKellaich, Road Safety Manager
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager
Mr A McCann, Economy, and Regeneration Manager
Mr N Young, Active Travel Manager
Mr T Stott, Principal Planner
Mr A Puls, Environment Team Leader
Mr D Chisholm, Tourism and Inward Investment Team Leader
Ms J Cromarty, Sustainable Transport Team Leader
Mr D Summers, Principal Transport Officer
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager, Performance & Governance
Mrs O Marsh, Committee Officer, Performance & Governance

Also in attendance:

Ms S Reynolds and Mr K Smith, Spider Entertainment

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

Mr K Gowans in the Chair

Business

1. Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence Gairm a' Chlàir agus Leisgeulan

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr A Christie.

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

The Committee **NOTED** the following Declarations of Interest:-

Item 5 – Mr M Green
Item 16– Mr D Louden

And the following Transparency Statements:-

Items 7 and 9 – Mr H Morrison

3. Good News Naidheachdan Matha

The Committee **NOTED** the following items of Good News:-

Qualified Chartered Surveyor

William Crombie joined Highland Council in July 2021 as a Graduate Estates Surveyor. William was primarily based in the Industrial and Investment Estates team and managed investment property on behalf of the Council, securing new tenants, negotiating rent reviews and dealing with general lease management. William had his formal interview with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors on the 16 April and received confirmation he had passed this week on his first attempt.

B9176 Struie High Bridge

On 19 April the High Bridge on the B9176 Struie Road reopened to traffic a week ahead of schedule, following a six-week closure to carry out essential bridge repairs and road safety improvements. The works were designed and supervised by the Highland Council's Project Design Unit and undertaken by Diack and Macaulay Ltd.

Outdoor Access Team

Two popular upland paths in Wester Ross were improved using £20,000 of Place Based funds. The Flowerdale waterfall path and parts of Ullapool Hill path were

suffering badly with water damage and needed specialist path construction techniques.

4. Inverness Castle Experience Update Cunntas mu Chaisteal Inbhir Nis

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/10/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

Following an introduction, during which progress on the Castel Project was reported, Ms S Reynolds, Spider Entertainment, gave a presentation in amplification of the report providing information on the proposed visitor attraction. Inverness Castle, when completed, would be a World Class attraction and visitors would experience their visit using the latest technology. She outlined the attractions and facilities that would be incorporated in the gardens, the North, South and West Tower Experience, and the Link Building.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- Inverness Castle, a truly collaborative project, would benefit the whole of Highland;
- Members were encouraged, should the opportunity arise, to visit the Castle Project as it evolved. After a number of years it was now becoming a tangible reality. Working with the community and using the knowledge of staff formally employed by the now-closed Tourist Information Centre was encouraged;
- the use of the £100,000 UK Government Shared Prosperity Funding for a training programme was commended. This provided an opportunity for young people to be upskilled and would provide them with training and skills that would remain with them;
- it was suggested that the “Gathering Together Room” be renamed the “Gathering Room”;
- such world class attractions and events brought people back from abroad. Visitors wanted to come to Highland so it was important that facilities were made available;
- the Inverness Castle Experience would have a wide, and positive, impact on the local economy, benefitting businesses such as restaurants;
- an exhibition highlighting the success of Runrig was part of the Experience but it was also important to incorporate Feis Rois and, moving to the winter months, Highland Ceilidhs. Also, with the stories, it was important these were rotated so visitors returning had a new experience. It was important to keep the attraction fresh;
- shinty and Scottish Country Dancing were also important parts of the culture of Highland and confirmation was sought, and provided, that these were part of the Experience.
- the entire tour would take 2½ hours;
- once in profit, Highland Council would receive 50% and it was queried how this money would be reallocated;

- as the project had received Inverness City and Region Deal money it was important that visitors were also signposted elsewhere; and
- there would be limited parking at the Castle apart from a Drop-Off zone but parking would be available elsewhere in Inverness and visitors would be encouraged to use Park and Ride.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** progress on the project;
- NOTED** the Executive Summary of the Operating Plan;
- AGREED** to the use of £100,000 UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund for the training programme proposed in section 8.13 of the report; and
- AGREED** to the proposed governance arrangements outlined in section 9.4 of the report, to commence in November 2024 once the Head of the Inverness Castle Experience had been appointed.

5. Draft Sustainable Tourism Strategy Dreachd Ro-innleachd Turasachd Sheasmhach

Declaration of Interest – Mr M Green made a Declaration of Interest as himself and his wife were owners of Seaview Lodge holiday let and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, he left the meeting for this item.

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/11/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- it was reassuring the Council was working with and listening to partners in the development of this strategy;
- concerns were raised about having a large enough workforce to deliver the plan as the tourism and care industries were competing for the same workers, especially in rural areas;
- in response to a question it was confirmed that local tourism organisations had been invited to participate in consultations around the strategy;
- information was sought, and provided, on the provision of wifi for tourists especially in areas where local people did not currently have good internet access;
- there had been a surge in motorhome and camping tourism post Covid which would not have been reflected in the data from the 2019 consultation and this could have a negative effect on the environment and the overall experience for visitors to the area; and
- it was suggested that camping management zones such as those at Loch Lomond be created to ensure camping was managed sustainably and over-tourism in certain areas was avoided.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the work done in recent months in preparation of the draft Sustainable Tourism Strategy;
- ii. **AGREED** the contents of the draft Sustainable Tourism Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report which had been developed for public consultation; and
- iii. **AGREED** the proposed approach to engagement as set out in Section 7 of the report and the proposal to refer a final draft strategy to a future Committee meeting for approval.

6. Masterplan Consent Areas Sgìrean Aonta a' Phlana Mhaighstir

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/12/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy which explained the Scottish Government's proposed introduction of discretionary powers to establish Masterplan Consent Areas (MCAs) under new planning legislation and a recommended response from the Council to the consultation on this proposal.

Following commentary on the report from Officers, the following main points were raised:-

- the open and responsive nature of the early engagement with the Local Plans Team was welcomed;
- the MCA would help the Council prepare for the support of strategic employment growth associated with the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport project and specifically the Green Freeport Tax Sites. The MCA would streamline development processes whilst ensuring the integrity of the development plans and place plan. This was a consultation, the first stage in a long process which would involve significant engagement with interested parties. There would be a further report to this Committee to clarify how MCAs would be managed and scrutinised.
- it was highlighted that the opportunities arising from the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport were well recognised as was the requirement to build houses across Highland to support the project and maximise its potential. However, there was a risk that MCAs were seen as a way of bypassing the Local Development Plan process and circumventing stakeholder consultation, and no one wanted this. It was welcomed that the response to Question 5 would be amended to read "Any specific MCA proposal should involve stakeholder consultation including community councils and consideration of any Local Place Plan";
- the challenge would be to ensure MCAs work for all concerned and to ensure local aspirations and plans were not sidelined;
- the consultation and other stages in the MCA process should reflect the need to ensure that community wellbeing was actually taking place, such as the delivery of schools, health care facilities, houses and all the other important facilities that were required and delivered on time.

- the capacity of Officers within the Planning team to undertake work on MCAs was queried. It was highlighted that the costs of staff work involved must be fully recovered;
- there were concerns about the MCAs proposal given the potential implications for communities in Highland. It was highlighted that the Scottish Government and the Council wanted communities to become more involved in local decision making, but the proposed MCAs looked like they would take decision making away from communities. In this respect, it was queried how MCAs might align with the Community Empowerment Act and Local Place Plans;
- MCAs would help meet the needs of local communities, inward investors, housing developers, and would enable collaborative consensus building by engaging with communities on MCA proposals. MCAs would help developers/agencies with projects to help tackle climate change, by speeding up the climate transition plan;
- the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan would hopefully be adopted soon which had space for around 4800 housing units, so there were sites that would continue to be supported through the development plan process. However, given the pace of change that there might be with the Green Freeport, the MCA was a tool to react quickly to proposed developments. An MCA would not be developer led, but had to be done in partnership with the local authority and the community;
- the guidance contained in the report covered a number of the points raised by Members;
- community engagement was intended as part of the ongoing process on MCAs and once details on MCAs had been confirmed consideration would be given to the practical approach on involving communities; and
- it was suggested that the consultation should be included on the Council's social media sites for greater public awareness.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- AGREED** the Council's response to the current Scottish Government MCAs consultation as detailed within Appendix 1 of the report, subject to consideration being given to points raised at the meeting and the consultation response being amended appropriately;
- AGREED** that the statement in Paragraph 5.3 of the report was published to indicate the Council's intent, as required by the legislation;
- NOTED** the potential application of the MCA model within Highland; and
- AGREED** that the Council continues to investigate the role of MCAs to address emerging development requirements, and that further reports on this matter would be brought to this Committee before any commitment was made.

7. Performance Monitoring Report Q3 2023-24 Aithisg Sgrùdadh Coileanaidh R3 2023-24

Transparency Statement: Mr H Morrison made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item as his son was an employee of the roads department

However, having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest to declare.

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/13/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy which provided performance information for Quarter 3 2023/24 regarding Corporate Indicators; Contribution to the Corporate Plan; Service Plan Progress; Mitigation of Service Risks; and Service updates out with the Corporate Indicators or Service.

Reference was made to the Service complaints response times and that it took a lot of time to investigate complaints. This put more pressure on the Planning team and it was queried what could be done to alleviate this pressure. It was advised that Service planning performance was not as good as it should be and this was due to staffing resources. Recent appointments would help alleviate the pressures on the team and should be reflected in the performance indicators going forward.

The Committee **NOTED** the Service's performance and risk information.

8. Active Travel and Road Safety Update Cunntas às Ùr air Siubhal Gníomhach agus Sàbhailteachd Rathaid

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/14/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- thanks were expressed to the officers for the report;
- it was queried if the early adoption of 20mph speed limits should be continued given the lack of public support;
- questions were raised about the Active Travel Strategy and there were concerns about the impact on rural communities. In many parts of the Highlands, cars remained the most realistic option for travel and people should not be discouraged from driving;
- it was suggested that this issue could potentially be deferred to allow the public time to reflect;
- it was raised that the lack of a plan for a path from Inverness Airport to Dalcross Industrial Estate was disappointing and it was queried whether this could be included in the future;
- the Council was applauded for its work with SUSTRANS and HITRANS, and it was expressed that collaboration between different groups on this project had been impressive;
- Members resolved that the process of encouraging Active Travel took time, but the willingness and determination existed to deliver this if facilities were available;
- maintenance was a vital consideration and, in some bike lanes, drop kerbs were not flush which had the potential to damage bicycles;
- speed limit issues were highlighted on the A82 and it was suggested that limits were inconsistent throughout the country;

- lower speed limits were welcomed by some Members and consultation should allow for adjustments if required;
- it was queried, and confirmed, that this was the team responsible for new cycle path developments; and
- it was considered that lower speed limits were working well within Inverness, and it was remarked that Active Travel projects within the city were developing well.

The Committee:-

- APPROVED** the Draft Active Travel Strategy;
- NOTED** the Achievements of the Active Travel Team in 2023 – 2024 and the Active Travel Workflow Programme for 2024 – 2025;
- APPROVED** the Draft Road Safety Plan;
- NOTED** the long-term reduction realised in all injury severity collisions in Highland within the lifecycle of the previous national casualty reduction targets which ran to 2020; and
- APPROVED** the adoption of the 2030 Casualty Reduction Targets and note the use of the Safe Systems Strategic approach to Road Safety and Casualty reduction in Highland that had been adopted with a view to delivering these reductions.

9. Service Workforce Plan Annual Progress Adhartas Bliadhnaì Plana Feachd-obrach Seirbheis

Transparency Statement: Mr H Morrison made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item as his son was an employee of the roads department. However, having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest to declare.

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/15/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

The Committee **NOTED** the four-year action plan and progress report.

10. In-house Bus Service Seirbheis Bhusaichean Ion-Taigh

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/16/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- all staff involved with the in-house bus service were thanked for their positive attitudes and efforts in making the project a success. The project had achieved savings and received positive feedback from users of the service,

and consideration now required to be given to future progression of the service;

- expansion of the bus service to Badenoch and Strathspey would be welcomed;
- attention was drawn to the value of in-house community transport facilities, which could provide flexibility of service to meet the needs of the ageing and the young population. This could be further taken forward through the Community Planning Partnerships;
- it was hoped that any future investment in buses would take into account the climate emergency; and
- attention was drawn to the need for coaches with toilet facilities for longer journeys, although caution was also advised in respect of the accessibility of coaches for people with mobility issues.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** the financial and operational achievements of the in-house bus operation; and
- AGREED** that a report be brought to a future committee on the implications of moving the operation to an Arm's Length External Organisation.

11. Draft Ecology Strategy and Action Plan Dreachd Ro-innleachd agus Plana-gnìomha Eag-eòlais

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/17/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** the content of the draft Ecology Strategy and Actions contained therein; and
- APPROVED** the draft Ecology Strategy and Action Plan for an 8-week public consultation.

12. Nature Restoration Fund Update Cunntas mun Mhaoin Ath-nuadhachaidh Nàdair

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/18/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

The Chair welcomed the positive way forward, recognising how this fund helped many communities and organisations across Highland.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** update on 2023/24 Nature Restoration Fund (NRF) scheme;
- AGREED** the funding proposals for the 2024/25 NRF scheme as set out in section 6 of the report; and
- AGREED** that funding decisions in respect of the 2024/25 NRF grant scheme be delegated as outlined in section 7 of the report.

13. Draft Biodiversity Planning Guidance Dreachd Stiùireadh Dealbhadh Bith-iomadachd

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/19/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

Members queried if consultation and partnership working with the UHI was included within the process.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to adopt the revised Biodiversity Planning Guidance (BPG) as non-statutory planning guidance; and
- ii. **AGREED** to the principle of the Council accepting financial payments to include a management fee to deliver biodiversity enhancement, as per 5.11-5.15 of the revised BPG, and that following the development of a detailed methodology and with the agreement of the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy, this would be implemented as part of the BPG.

14. Biodiversity Duty Report 2021-2023 Aithisg Dleastanas Bith-iomadachd 2021-2023

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/20/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

Members queried if there were sufficient biodiversity staff to process the large amount of detail and information required for the processes including meeting legislative requirements. In response, it was explained authority to recruit two new Ecology officers had been granted and, while there was pressure, this was being managed.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the breadth of work undertaken across the Council to further the conservation of biodiversity; and
- ii. **APPROVED** the Biodiversity Duty Report 2021-2023 for publication on the Council's website.

15. Wildfire Working Group Buidheann-obrach Theintean Fiadhaich

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/21/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- thanks were expressed to the Working Group for their hard work and for producing the recommendations. It was felt that a focus on necessary resources should be maintained;
- thanks were also expressed to the Officers involved in supporting the Wildfire Working Group;
- it was disappointing that financial constraints meant some worthwhile ideas were unviable;
- thanks were conveyed to the many agencies including Highland Council, led by Scottish Fire Rescue Service (SFRS), who responded to the two major wildfire incidents in Highland in 2023; and
- Members felt that there was insufficient funding from National Government towards the threat of wildfire, and it was hoped that this would be evaluated in the near future.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** background to wildfires, roles and responsibilities of lead agencies, the work of the Wildfire Working Group (WFWG), and Highland Council;
- NOTED** and agree the actions arising from WFWG, subject to funding being available to support those actions with a revenue implication; and
- AGREED** to continue liaison with Partners involved in dealing with Wildfire responses.

16. Community Regeneration Fund Maoin Ath-nuadhachadh Coimhearsnachd

Declaration of Interest – Mr D Louden made a Declaration of Interest as a Director & Company Secretary of the Tain Heritage Trust which has been a beneficiary of the Community Regeneration Fund and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, he left the meeting for this item.

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/22/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- thanks were expressed to officers for their hard work and efficiency in the way they handled the various funds to maximise the number of projects that could be supported, especially as it was a difficult task with tight deadlines;
- the NICE's Team Hamish social gathering space at the Links was highlighted as a successful project which built on the success of the Links Splash Pad and further reinforced Nairn as a major tourist destination. Also, the Nairn BID Heritage Trail was a vital part of the Town Centre Improvement Plan and would be of long term benefit;
- section 5.7 of the report sought to extend the remit of the Community Regeneration Fund Strategic Sub Committee and this was welcomed;
- Members highlighted the tremendous work involved with officers supporting local communities. Section 4.3 of the report confirmed there were 798

expressions of interests from community groups, with 378 full applications, and 200 groups were supported;

- Community Groups expressed thanks to officers for their good communication and the way the process had been managed; and
- it was confirmed that deferred projects would not be covered in this round of funding but were able to be resubmitted with strengthened applications in the next round of funding in the future.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** that the current priority in the Community Regeneration Fund (CRF) programme was to address the outstanding unclaimed balance of funding sitting with approved projects; and to take steps when setting criteria, at assessment stage and when making grant award decisions to ensure that going forward this issue was not repeated; and
- AGREED** to widen the remit of the CRF Strategic sub group as proposed in section 5.7 of the report.

17. Islands Connectivity Plan Consultation **Co-chomhairleachadh air Plana Ceangal nan Eilean**

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/23/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

It was disappointing that the Mallaig to Small Isle ferry was operated by Highland Council because the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Service timetable did not tie in with the school timetable. It was important to make a case for extra resources so that these ferries could continue to run services but, with only operating costs being covered, this was unsustainable going forward.

The Committee **APPROVED** the draft response which was attached as Appendix 1 within the report.

18. Flood Risk Management Policy **Poileasaidh Stiùireadh Cunnart Thuiltean**

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/24/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- while welcoming the update to the policy, it was felt the issue was not with the management policy but the devastating cost of inaction. For Nairn alone, inaction would result in the loss of holes 1-7 at Nairn Golf Club, the loss of large areas of the links seafront, including the putting green, and Fishertown, a conservation area, facing the possibility of widespread flooding;
- the flood risks in many other areas were highlighted by Members and it was suggested that the Leader write to both Scottish and UK Government highlighting the plight;

- the management of burns and rivers would involve monitoring and maintenance and the frequency of this was queried;
- the introduction of flood alleviation works was sometimes lengthy but it was better to persevere with it rather than encounter flooding;
- the Scottish Government needed to accept flood risk as a priority and allocate resources accordingly;
- in response to a question, it was confirmed that landowners were reminded of their riparian responsibilities; and
- there was less funding available since the UK had left the European Union.

The Committee:-

- APPROVED** the Flood Risk Management Policy as contained in Appendix 2 of the report which accords with the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009; and
- NOTED** that the previous Flood Prevention Policy was now obsolete.

19. Abnormal Load Policy Poileasaidh Luchd Neo-àbhaistich

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/25/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Abnormal Load Policy as contained in Appendix 1 of the report.

20. Management of Sub-Standard Structures Policy Stiùireadh Poileasaidh nan Structaran Fo-Ìre

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/26/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

With reference to the Council's duty to maintain adopted roads, some communities had made representations as to the poor condition of some roads.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Management of Sub-Standard Structures Policy as contained in Appendix 2 of the report, as a replacement for the existing policy.

21. Membership of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) and North Sea Commission (NSC) Ballrachd Co-labhairt Roinnean Mara Iomallach na Roinn Eòrpa agus Coimisean a' Chuain a Tuath

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/27/2024 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy.

The Committee was informed membership details of Member representation would follow. The benefits which would be gained were outlined in the report

and was particularly pertinent to Highland given that the length of coastline was similar to that of other countries such as France.

The Committee **AGREED** to seek membership of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) and North Sea Commission (NSC).

22. Appointment to the Flow Country Partnership Cur an Dreuchd gu Com-pàirteachas nam Flobhachan

The Peatlands Partnership was formed at the end of 2006 following the completion of the EU LIFE funded Peatlands Project and aimed to develop and build on that project. The Partnership changed its name in 2021 to the Flow Country Partnership to emphasise the wider links in the landscape and its focus on the peatlands of Caithness and Sutherland.

* The Committee **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the Council the appointment of Mr R Bremner from the Caithness or Sutherland Areas as a Trustee of the Flow Country Partnership.

23. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

The Committee **NOTED** the following Minutes of the Planning Applications Committees (PAC):-

- i. North PAC –30 January 2024;
- ii. South PAC – 7 February 2024;
- iii. North PAC– 5 March 2024;

and also **APPROVED**:-

- iv. Wildfires Working Group 16 February 2024;
- v. Inverness Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Monitoring Group of 22 February 2024;
- vi. Harbours Management Board 23 February 2024;
- vii. Community Regeneration Strategic Fund Sub Group 27 March 2024; and
- viii. City Region Deal Monitoring Group of 25 April 2024.

24. Exclusion of the Public Às-dùnadh a' Phobaill

The Committee **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50A (4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

25. Housing Development Initiatives Iomairtean Leasachaidh Taigheadais

There had been circulated to Members only Report No. ECI/28/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

The Committee **NOTED** the recommendations as detailed in the report.

26. Property Transactions Monitoring Report
Aithisg Sgrùdaidh Ghnothachasan Seilbhe

There had been circulated to Members only Report No. ECI/29/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

The Committee **NOTED** the recommendations as detailed in the report.

27. Land and Property
Fearann agus Seilbh

There had been circulated to Members only Report No. ECI/30/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

The Committee **AGREED** the recommendations as detailed in the report.

The meeting ended at: 1.55pm