

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Special Economy and Infrastructure Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Tuesday, 11 June 2024 at 2.00pm.

### **Present:**

Mr M Baird (Remote)	Mr H Morrison (Remote)
Mr I Brown	Ms L Niven (remote)
Mr A Christie	Mrs T Robertson
Mr K Gowans	Mr R Stewart
Mr M Green	Ms M Smith
Mr R Jones (Remote)	Mrs M Ross (Remote)
Mr P Logue	Ms K Willis (Remote)
Mr D Macpherson (Remote)	

### **Non-Members also present:**

Ms S Atkin	Ms Emma Knox (Remote)
Dr C Birt (Remote)	Mr G MacKenzie (Remote)
Mr B Boyd (Remote)	Mr R MacKintosh (Remote)
Mrs I Campbell (Remote)	Ms K MacLean (Remote)
Mr R Bremner	Mr D McDonald (Remote)
Ms M Hutchison (remote)	Mr J McGillivray (Remote)
Mr B Lobban	Mr D Millar (Remote)
Mr D Louden	

### **Officials in Attendance:**

Mr D Brown, Chief Executive  
Mr M MacLeod, Assistant Chief Executive - Place  
Mr A Maguire, Head of Development and Regeneration  
Mr S Fraser, Head of Corporate Governance  
Ms S McKandie, Head of Revenue and Customer Services  
Mr B Porter, Head of Corporate Fin & Commercialism  
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager  
Mr N Osborne, Climate Change and Energy Team Manager  
Mr D Chisholm, Tourism, and Inward Investment Team Leader  
Mr A Coyle, Corporate Comms & Engagement Officer  
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager  
Mrs O Marsh, Committee Officer

### **Also in attendance:**

**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**

Apologies were intimated on behalf of Mr J Bruce, Mr M Cameron and Mr W MacKay.

## 2. **Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement** **Foilseachaidhean Com-pàirt/Aithris Fhollaiseachd**

There were no declarations of interest or transparency statements.

## 3. **Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport – Full Business Case update (FBC)** **Saor-phort Uaine Inbhir Nis agus Chromba – Cunntas mun Chùis Ghnòthachais Iomlan**

There had been circulated Report No. ECI/31/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

Attention was drawn that there had been no material changes to the strategic direction set out in the FBC from the Outline Business Case (OBC) and that the approval of the FBC by the Scottish and UK Governments would mean that the ICFGF officially existed with all customs and tax powers for a period of 25 years.

It was clarified that the £25M seed funding projects had been agreed under the OBC and had undergone the scrutiny panel process with individual OBCs submitted and approved prior to submission of the FBC to the UK and Scottish Government.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the Executive Summary of the Full Business Case for the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport enclosed at Appendix 1 of the report noting the environmental, social and economic benefits which were expected to be achieved for the region;
- ii. **AGREED** that the Council's obligations, under its Accountable Body role, would continue after the FBC had been completed. These obligations include the ongoing monitoring and verification that the operation of the Green Freeport ensures propriety, compliance with regulations and value for money;
- iii. **AGREED** that the proposed NDR Investment Plan (and subsequent reviews) referred to in Section 5 of the report were reported to future meetings of the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Monitoring Group and formally considered by the Economy & Infrastructure (E&I) Committee for response to the Green Freeport Company; and
- iv. **AGREED** that the Assistant Chief Executive - Place continues as the Council's nominated Director on the Green Freeport Company Board until such time as the Memorandum of Understanding between UK/Scottish Governments, the Green Freeport Company and the Council had been signed and agreed (anticipated to be November 2024).

## 4. **Exclusion of the Public** **Às-dùnadh a' Phobail**

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.

## 5. **Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport – Full Business Case** **Saor-phort Uaine Inbhir Nis agus Chromba – Cùis Ghnòthachais Iomlan**

There had been circulated to Members only Report No. ECI/32/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

- \* Following discussion, the Committee **AGREED** to recommend that Council approve the Full Business Case (FBC) for the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport (ICFGF) as shown in Appendix 1 of the report to allow for submission to the UK and Scottish Governments.

The meeting ended at 3.40 pm.