

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Dingwall and Seaforth Area Committee** held in the Committee Room, Council Offices, Dingwall on 12 August 2024 at 10.30 am.

Present:

Mr S Kennedy
Mr G MacKenzie

Mrs A MacLean
Mrs M Paterson

In attendance:

Mrs D Ferguson, Senior Ward Manager
Mrs G MacPherson, Committee Officer

Also in attendance:

Mr C MacPherson, Chief Executive Officer, Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport
Mr I Moncrieff, Roads Operation Manager
Chief Inspector C Smith, 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 G MacKenzie in the Chair

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 Interests/Transparency Statements.

3. Recess Powers Cumhachdan Fosaidh

The Committee **NOTED** that the recess powers granted by the Council at its meeting on 27 June 2024 did not require to be exercised in relation to the business of the Dingwall and Seaforth Area Committee.

4. Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Update Cunntas às Ùr mu Shaor-phort Uaine Inbhir Nis agus Chaolas Chromba

There had been a presentation by Mr Calum MacPherson, Chief Executive Officer, Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport.

It was stated that as the full business case progressed, the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Board was pressing on with the following:-

- continuing to work with local workforce development initiatives and education teams so that local supply chains could be in a position to take jobs when they start to flow. A large job fair had been held earlier this year, involving students from Dingwall Academy and other local schools, which promoted vocational apprenticeships; and
- encouraging people to come to the area and invest, not only from Scotland and the rest of the UK but also from Europe, Asia and the United States. It was hoped that this would encourage significant job creation over the next few years and clarification was provided to Members in terms of managing expectations and timing.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- reassurance was sought in terms of housing the workforce. Members were informed that the Board had met with housing associations providers, private house builders and developers. Clarification was provided in terms of responsibilities and it was acknowledged that the Board and Council would work together;
- information was sought, and provided, regarding Local Place Based Plans and the Social Scotland Pledge;
- the recorded webinars were commended as they allowed communities to watch them at a time convenient to them;
- further engagement with local communities and community councils was requested and it was suggested that to involve as many community councils as possible, a joint meeting be held;
- it was said that the Ward of Dingwall and Seaforth might not be ready for the impact of the development and examples were provided, such as, flooding issues in the Dingwall Business Park, the number of beds having reduced at Ross Memorial Hospital and lack of local transport, and it was acknowledged that transport links and childcare support were being considered;
- Mr MacPherson offered assurances that Dingwall would be at the heart of what was happening, in terms of employment and businesses in the area;
- the Board would be meeting with NHS, Fire Brigade, Police and other key services in the next few weeks, in terms of growth;
- assurance was sought, and provided, regarding local contractors accessing the work and it was confirmed that a 'supply chain day' would be arranged for Dingwall soon; and
- Members were encouraged to keep in touch with Mr MacPherson should they feel an issue needs to be addressed.

The Committee **NOTED** the presentation.

5. Police – Area Performance Summary Poilis – Geàrr-chunntas Dèanadais Sgìreil

There had been circulated Report No DSA/10/24 by the North Area Commander.

The Chair welcomed Chief Inspector Smith to the Committee after his recent appointment as North Highland Area Commander. Thereafter the Commander provided an indepth explanation of the report and offered helpful insight to the statistics.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Members thanked the Commander for his comprehensive and thorough report;
- Police attendance at community councils was lacking and it was confirmed that although the Police did not have the capacity to attend every meeting, the Commander aimed to bring together community council chairs, and any other appropriate person, to a once-to-twice-yearly meeting. It was suggested that this meeting might include the Green Freepoint;
- it was confirmed that reported road traffic collisions were recorded on Police systems and they state whether or not Police attended; and
- the Chair notified the Commander that the Snowman Rally was to be held on Saturday, 19 October 2024 and Dingwall High Street was to be closed off.

The Committee **NOTED** the progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2023-2026 Year 1, attached as Annex A to this report, for the period covering 01 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

6. Winter Service Plan 2024/25 Plana Seirbheis Geamhraidh 2024/25

There had been circulated Report No DSA/11/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Members asked the Service to ensure that grit bins were filled prior to the start of the season;
- recent road surfacing works and pot hole repairs were welcomed, however, concern was raised regarding gully emptying and it was asked that this took place as soon as possible to tackle vegetation at the side of the road and culverts. It was said that the Dingwall gully sucker had been in use in the flooding prone areas. It was asked if the main roads could also be looked at; and
- upon request, the Roads Operation Manager provided a list of local contacts and it was asked if the establishment be provided to the Senior Ward Manager.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Winter Service Plan for 2024/25.

7. Dingwall Common Good Fund Monitoring 2024/2025 Sgrùdadh Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Pheofharain 2024/2025

There had been circulated Report No DSA/12/24 by the Heads of Community Support and Engagement and Corporate Finance and Commercialism.

The Committee scrutinised and **NOTED** the Quarter 4 monitoring statement for the Dingwall Common Good Fund.

8. Dingwall and Seaforth Ward Discretionary budget applications approved since last meeting
larrtasaid buidseat fo Ùghdarras Uàrd Inbhir Pheofharain agus Shìophort air an aontachadh bho choinneamh mu dheireadh

The Committee **NOTED** that the following Dingwall and Seaforth Ward Discretionary Budget applications have been approved since its last meeting.

- i. Dingwall Fire Brigade Community Group - Gala Week 2024 - £1,250.00
- ii. Conon Bridge Community Council - Refinement of Social Media - £300.00
- iii. Black Isle Farmers' Society - Black Isle Show Sponsorship 2024 - £400.00
- iv. Youth Highland - Summer Activities 2024 (Multi Ward) - £500.00
- v. Dingwall Football Club - Equipment for Season 2024/25 - £961.00

Clarification was sought regarding the Black Isle Farmers' Society as Members thought it had been agreed that sponsorship was no longer offered, rather an application could have been made for incurred costs. Members were reminded that approvals were granted as per the guidelines.

9. Minutes
Geàrr-chunntas

The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes of Meeting of the Dingwall and Seaforth Area Committee held on 20 May 2024, which were approved by the Council on 27 June 2024.

The meeting ended at 12.15pm.