

The Highland Council

**South Planning Applications
Committee**

Council Chamber, HQ, 1 October 2024, 10.30am

Minute / Action Note

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their recent meeting and the actions that now require to be taken. The webcast of the meeting will be available within 48 hours of broadcast and will remain online for 12 months: <https://highland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

A separate memorandum will be issued if detailed or further instructions are required, or where the contents of the memorandum are confidential. Please arrange to take the required action based on this action note.

Committee Members Present:

Mr C Ballance (remote from 6.7)
Mr M Cameron (remote)
Mr D Fraser
Mr L Fraser
Mr K Gowans
Mr A Graham
Mr R Jones
Mr B Lobban

Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr A MacKintosh (except 6.4 to 6.7)
Mr D Macpherson (except 6.2)
Mr P Oldham
Ms M Reid
Ms L Saggars
Ms K Willis (sub for Ms S Fanet)

Non-Committee Members Present: Mr D McDonald, Mr S Coghill

Substitutes: Ms K Willis, for Ms S Fanet

Officers participating:

Mr D Mudie, Area Planning Manager – South (DM)
Mr P Wheelan, Strategic Projects Team Leader (PW)
Mr B Robertson, Team Leader (BR)
Ms L Prins, Principal Planner (LP)
Ms C MacLeod, Planner (CMacL)
Ms M Smith, Planner (MS)
Ms J Bain, Planner (JB)
Ms H Stevenson (HS)
Ms C McArthur, Principal Solicitor
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Administrator

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<p>Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan</p> <p>Ms S Fanet, Mr T MacLennan.</p>	
		n/a
2	<p>Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</p>	

	None.	n/a
3	Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais	
	There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 August 2024 which was APPROVED .	n/a
4	Major Development Update Iartasan Mòra	
	There had been circulated Report No PLS/050/23 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the "Major" development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination. The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.	PW
5	Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais	
5.1	Description: Construction of battery energy storage scheme (BESS) (up to 49.9MW) and associated works. (24/03422/PAN) (PLS/051/24) Ward: 18 Applicant: Whirlwind Renewables Ltd Site Address: Land SE Of Sleigh Landscapes Grigorhill Industrial Estate Nairn. Matters raised by Members included an email received from the Community Council by the Chair, which would be forwarded to officers.	
	NOTED the submission. Note for case officer – to review the concerns raised in an email from Nairn River Community Council which Councillor Oldham will forward.	DM/PW
6	Planning Applications to be Determined Iartasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
6.1	Applicant: Fred Olsen Renewables Limited (23/05579/S36) (PLS/052/24) Location: Culachy Estate, Land 4km SE of Newtown, Invergarry (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Erection and operation of a wind farm comprising 8 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 200m, battery energy storage system, site access junction, access tracks, crane hardstandings, underground cabling, on-site substation and maintenance building, temporary construction compounds, laydown areas, batching plant and potential excavation/borrow pits. Recommendation: Raise An Objection In relation to the visualisation packs provided by the applicant to accompany the presentation, various issues were raised including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the pack should be page numbered in future; • the pack should be distributed in advance if possible; • some Members felt the visualisation pack should be available 	

	<p>electronically;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the pack should be made available to Members participating online; and a site visit to view the area would be beneficial. <p>Clarification was sought on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the extent of other windfarms in the area, including refused consents; transmission lines and connections to the national grid; aviation lighting impacts; guidance on dealing with battery storage; the possible inclusion of conditions in case any objection was overturned; economic benefits and the social value charter; and the process for a public local inquiry should the Council object. 	
	Agreed: to Raise an Objection as detailed in the report.	PW
6.2	<p>Applicant: Chrathaich Renewables LLP (23/03311/S36) (PLS/053/24) Location: Land 3615M NW Of Burnside, Bhlaraidh, Glenmoriston (Ward 12). Nature of Development: Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 30 years, comprising of 14 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of 149.9m, access tracks, borrow pits, substation, control building, and ancillary infrastructure Recommendation: Raise No Objection</p> <p>Following a presentation, clarification was sought on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the location of the turbines; the use of the road network during the construction period by school children; the cumulative impact of other windfarms; energy targets and environmental benefits; golden eagles and the RSPB response; water schemes and measurements; energy and economic benefits; landscape sensitivity requirements; the possible removal of turbine 14; access tracks; impact on peat land; and grid connections. <p>During debate, the following issues were considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mitigation for golden eagles; concern about turbine 14; the cumulative impact on visual and road traffic considerations; the potential effect on tourism; road safety improvements; concerns about the cumulative effects of many windfarm developments; and mitigation for the use of the road network. 	
	<p>Agreed to:</p> <p>i. Raise No Objection subject to (1) the removal of Turbine 14 as it presents as an outlier with undesirable visual effects for receptors within</p>	PW

	<p>the Glen Affric National Scenic Area represented by viewpoint 12 and (2) the inclusion of a schedule of mitigation for the road network, specifically the A831; and</p> <p>ii. Grant delegated authority to the Area Planning Manager to respond in the event that any further environmental information comes forward that supports the deletion of Turbine 14.</p>	
6.3	<p>Applicant: Scottish Hydro Electric Transmission Plc (24/01732/S37) (PLS/054/24)</p> <p>Location: Land 10KM NW Of Coul Farm House, Laggan (Ward 20).</p> <p>Nature of Development: Melgarve cluster project - Section 37 application under the Electricity Act for the installation and operation of approximately 7 km of 132 kV overhead line on double circuit steel structure towers, and ancillary development comprising 2 no. cable sealing end compounds, approximately 9.9 km of underground cable (7.3 km from the Dell Wind Farm on site substation, 1.8 km from the Cloiche Wind Farm on site substation and 0.8 km on approach into Melgarve substation), upgrades to existing access tracks, new permanent and temporary access tracks, and temporary working areas.</p> <p>Recommendation: Raise an Objection</p>	
	<p>Agreed: to defer this application, as requested by the applicant, to allow the applicant to undertake further discussions with NatureScot in relation to their objection.</p>	PW
6.4	<p>Applicant: RES (Renewable Energy Systems Limited) (24/02371/FUL) (PLS/055/24)</p> <p>Location: Land 3100M SW of Kingie Lodge, Invergarry (Ward 11).</p> <p>Nature of Development: Construction and erection of a meteorological mast, height up to 70m, for a temporary period of three years.</p> <p>Recommendation: Grant</p>	
	<p>Agreed: to Grant the application as detailed in the report.</p>	DM
6.5	<p>Applicant: Atina Property UK Limited (24/01791/S42) (PLS/056/24)</p> <p>Location: Land 120M NW Of Taigh Breagh, Achnabobane, Spean Bridge (Ward 11).</p> <p>Nature of Development: Section 42 application to develop land without compliance with Condition 1 of 19/02043/MS: saplings 40cm - 60cm in size shall be planted in shelters and staked in the area to the NW of the plot, as shown on the revised layout site plan drawing, together with groups of feathered 1.2m - 1.8m bare root trees in the positions shown along the boundaries of the plot</p> <p>Recommendation: Grant</p>	
	<p>Agreed: to Grant the application as detailed in the report.</p>	
6.6	<p>Applicant: Cornerstone (23/05603/FUL) (PLS/057/24)</p> <p>Location: Land 5690M SE Of Penstock Cottage, Lochaber Road, Kinlochleven (Ward 21).</p> <p>Nature of Development: Installation of a 30m lattice mast, shared antennas, transmission dish, associated ancillary development, access track and hardstanding area.</p> <p>Recommendation: Grant</p>	

	<p>Agreed: to Refuse the application for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The economic and social benefits of the mast are not considered sufficient to outweigh the adverse landscape and visual impacts in Wild Land Area 14, and the impact on deep peat. The additional coverage is very remote and will not serve a residential area, or provide significantly enhanced coverage to rural businesses, farms or crofts, in being geography based, and not needs based, contrary to policy 24e)(i), policy 4g)(i), policy 4g)(ii) and policy 5(c) of National Planning Framework 4, and policies 36, 46, 55, 57 and 61 of the Highland Wide Local Development Plan; and 2. The 30m tall mast would adversely affect the setting of the category A listed Blackwater dam by virtue of introducing an incongruous vertical feature alongside the striking horizontal feature of the dam in the landscape, contrary to policy 7(c) of NPF4, and policy 57 of the Highland Wide Local Development Plan. 	LP
6.7	<p>Applicant: Gateway (24/03592/FUL) (PLS/058/24) Location: Westview House Upper Myrtlefield Inverness IV2 5BX (Ward 19). Nature of Development: Change of use from house (Class 9) to residential institution (Class 8) Recommendation: Grant</p> <p>It was confirmed by the case officer that further representations had been received from nearby households, and a letter of support from NHS Highland had been received since the writing of the report. However, it was confirmed that these did not cover any additional material planning considerations that were not already addressed within the report.</p> <p>Mr K Gowans moved to refuse the application but, after taking planning policy advice from officers, withdrew his motion.</p>	
	Agreed: to Grant the application as detailed in the report.	CMacL
6.8	<p>Applicant: Mrs Thelma Jennie Elizabeth Slessor (24/01295/FUL) (PLS/059/24) Location: Taigh Abhainn, Station Road, Carrbridge, PH23 3AL (Ward 20). Nature of Development: Use of property as short-term letting unit and house Recommendation: Grant</p> <p>Mr B Lobban, seconded by Mr R Jones, moved to refuse the application for the reasons detailed below. Mr M Cameron moved, as an amendment, to grant the application as recommended but, having failed to find a seconder, his amendment fell.</p>	
	<p>Agreed: to Refuse the application for the following reason:</p> <p>Due to the nature of the development and the proximity of other existing short term let properties, this development would have an unacceptable impact on local amenity and the character of the neighbourhood and area, and, therefore, is contrary to Policy 30(e)(i) of NPF4.</p>	MS
6.9	<p>Applicant: Mr Ed and Mrs Zoe Baird (24/01922/FUL) (PLS/060/24) Location: Land 80M SW Of White Lady Lodge, Duthil, Carrbridge (Ward 20). Nature of Development: Installation of 3No. glamping pods, parking. Recommendation: Grant</p>	

	During discussion, assurance was sought that Condition 7 would cover sufficient landscaping along the boundary by the pods to prevent overlooking.	
	Agreed: to Grant the application as detailed in the report.	JB
6.10	Applicant: Ms Sue Craigen (24/01992/FUL) (PLS/061/24) Location: 53 Harbour Street, Nairn IV12 4NX (Ward 18). Nature of Development: Alteration and extension to house. Recommendation: Grant	
	Agreed: to Grant the application as detailed in the report.	JB
	The meeting ended at 3.30pm.	

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS
COMMITTEE

29 October 2024, 10.00AM

MINUTE / ACTION NOTE

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their meeting and the actions that now require to be taken. The webcast of the meeting will be available within 48 hours of broadcast and will remain online for 12 months: <https://highland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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Committee Members Present:

Mr M Baird (except item 7.5)
Mr R Bremner
Ms B Campbell (remote)
Ms L Kraft
Mrs A MacLean
Ms J McEwan (remote) (except items 7.6 and 7.7)
Mr D Millar
Mr C Munro (remote)
Ms M Paterson (remote)
Mr M Reiss
Mr K Rosie (remote)
Ms M Smith

Non-Committee Members Present:

Mr S Coghill
Ms M Hutchison
Mr H Morrison

Substitutes:

Ms M MacCallum
Ms L Niven (except item 7.7)
Ms M Ross

Apologies:

Ms S Atkin
Ms T Collier
Ms L Dundas
Mr R Gale

Officers participating:

Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager – North (DJ)
Mr P Wheelan, Planning Team Leader (PW)
Ms C Farmer-McEwan, Principal Planner (CF)

Mr M Fitzpatrick, Principal Planner (MF)
 Ms Jane Bridge (Senior Engineer) (JB)
 Ms R Banfro, Acting Principal Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk
 Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<p>Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan</p> <p>Apologies were intimated on behalf of Ms S Atkin, Ms T Collier, Ms L Dundas and Mr R Gale.</p>	n/a
2	<p>Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</p> <p>Ms J McEwan – item 7.6, item 7.7</p>	n/a
3	<p>Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a’ Gheàrr-chunntais</p> <p>There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 17 September 2024 which was APPROVED.</p>	n/a
4	<p>Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra</p> <p>There had been circulated Report No PLN/072/24 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the “Major” development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.</p>	PW
5	<p>Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais</p>	
5.1	<p>Description: Construction and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System along with associated infrastructure and ancillary works, earthworks, access, drainage, landscaping, cable to Fyrish substation, and biodiversity enhancements (24/03765/PAN) (PLN/073/24) Ward: 06 – Cromarty Firth Applicant: Field Fyrish Limited Site Address: Land 140M NW Of 2 Clashnabuiac, Alness</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the application.</p>	Jenna Baldie
5.2	<p>Description: Proposed new quarry 34.6 hectares to extract high grade Caithness flagstone. (24/03693/PAN) (PLN/074/24) Ward: 03 - Wick And East Caithness</p>	Craig Simms

	<p>Applicant: A&D Sutherland Ltd Site Address: Land 985M NW Of Lydias House, Toftingall Farm, Watten</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the application.</p>	
5.3	<p>Description: Laying of underground cabling to link Bettyhill Wind Farm Phase 2 and Dounreay substation (24/03761/PAN) (PLN/075/24) Ward: 1 – North, West and Central Sutherland Applicant: Bettyhill 2 Wind Ltd Site Address: Land 2375M SE Of Cairnview, Bettyhill</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the application.</p>	Laura May
5.4	<p>Description: The construction and operation of a battery energy storage system (BESS) with a maximum installed capacity of 49.9 Megawatts consisting of up to 40 storage containers, control buildings, transformers, landscaping, lighting, CCTV, formation of access, and associated works. (24/03835/PAN) (PLN/076/24) Ward: 02 – Thurso and North West Caithness Applicant: Ecocel Energy Site Address: Land 250M SE of Geise Farm, Halkirk, Thurso.</p> <p>During discussion clarification was sought on the potential risk of water and chemical run-off in the event of a fire.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the application.</p>	MF
5.5	<p>Description: Proposed redevelopment of the Talisker distillery site to Expand the existing output of the distillery with the construction of a new distillery, incorporating sustainable technologies, with associated support facilities at the site, together with all associated infrastructure, including new access, drainage, outfall, road improvement and landscaping works, including the demolition of existing production facilities post commission of the new facility (24/04246/PAN) (PLN/077/24) Ward: 10 - Eilean A' Cheò Applicant: Diageo Plc Site Address: Talisker Distillery, Carbost, Isle of Skye</p> <p>During discussion concerns were raised about the condition of the road through the village of Carbost during and post construction and the requirement of these matters to be considered by the Roads Team as part of their consideration of any planning application.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the application.</p>	Lisa MacDonald
6	<p>Continued Items Cuspairean a' Leantainn</p> <p>Applicant: Toftingall Wind Limited (23/04690/FUL) (PLN/078/24) Location: Land 725M East of Mybster Sub Station Spittal (Ward 03). Nature of Development: Erection and operation of a battery energy storage system with a maximum output of 49.9MW including switchgear and control buildings, landscaping, fencing and ancillary infrastructure.</p>	MF

	<p>Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>Motion: Mr R Bremner seconded by Mr D Millar, to grant the application subject to the conditions outlined in the report and the amendment of condition 5.</p> <p>Amendment: Mr M Reis seconded by Ms J McEwan, to defer the Application for an assessment of the implications of the UNESCO designation on the proposed development specifically relating to hydrology, with the expectation that the Applicant would be able to screen out other environmental impacts.</p> <p>There were 5 votes for the motion and 4 votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:</p> <p>For the motion: Mr R Bremner, Ms I Campbell, Ms L Kraft, Mr D Millar, Mr K Rosie</p> <p>For the Amendment: Mr M Baird, Ms J McEwan, Ms M Paterson, Mr M Reiss</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report and the revision of condition 5 the drafting of which to be drafted to officers.</p>	
7	Planning Applications to be Determined Iartasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
7.1	<p>Applicant: Energiekontor UK Ltd. (24/02094/S36) (PLN/079/24)</p> <p>Location: Land 1150M SW Of Tigh An Alt, Acheilidh, Rogart (Ward 04)</p> <p>Nature of Development: Acheilidh Wind Farm - Erection and operation of a wind farm for a period of 35 years, comprising of 12 wind turbines with a maximum blade tip height of between 200m and 230m, battery energy storage system (BESS), access tracks, borrow pits, substation, control building, and ancillary infrastructure</p> <p>Recommendation: Raise an Objection</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to Raise an Objection to the application.</p>	MF
7.2	<p>Applicant: Lochluichart Battery Storage Limited (23/05905/FUL) (PLN/080/24)</p> <p>Location: Land 705M NW Of Grudie Cottage, Grudie, Lochluichart, Garve (Ward:05)</p> <p>Nature of Development: Battery energy storage facility comprising a compound of battery and electrical equipment, access track, landscaping and ancillary works</p> <p>Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	MF

7.3	<p>Applicant: VM02 UK Ltd (24/02112/FUL) (PLN/081/24) Location: Land 460M NE of Fannich Lodge, Lochluichart, Garve (Ward 05). Nature of Development: Installation of 20m high lattice tower, ancillary equipment, compound, access track and associated development. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report and the revisal of condition number 7 being delegated to officers.</p>	David Borland
7.4	<p>Applicant: VM02 UK Ltd (24/02266/FUL) (PLN/082/24) Location: Land 220M NE of Heights Cottage, Incheril, Kinlochewe (Ward 05). Nature of Development: Installation of 20m high lattice tower and ancillary development. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report and the revisal of condition number 6 being delegated to officers.</p>	David Borland
7.5	<p>Applicant: Mr Rupert Haig-Thomas (23/04397/FUL) (PLN/083/24) Location: Land 220M NW Of Carbisdale Castle, Ardgay (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Land 220M NW Of Carbisdale Castle, Ardgay Recommendation: REFUSE</p> <p>Mr M Baird left the meeting for the duration of this item.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to REFUSE the application for the reasons detailed in the report and subject to the amendment of reason 4 of the reasons for refusal.</p>	Liam Burnside
7.6	<p>Applicant: Miss Sarah Renwick (24/00894/MSC) (PLN/084/24) Location: Land Adjacent to 3 Corntown Dairy, Conon Bridge (Ward 09). Nature of Development: Application for matters specified in conditions 1-5 of 22/00132/PIP (Erection of house). Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	CF
7.7	<p>Applicant: Sutherland Spaceport Ltd (24/01091/FUL) (PLN/085/24) Location: Land 2600M SW Of Dunbuie, Talmine (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Construction and operation of a vertical launch spaceport with launch operations control centre, launch site integration facility, launch pad complex, antenna park, access road, fencing, services and associated infrastructure at land 2600m Southwest of Dunbuie Talmine and summit of Ben Tongue (adjacent to existing telecommunications mast) Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report and subject to the amended plans.</p>	CF

	The meeting ended at 3.30pm.	
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**The Highland Council
South Planning Applications
Committee**

**Council Chamber, HQ, 19 November 2024, 10.30am
Minute / Action Note**

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their recent meeting and the actions that now require to be taken. The webcast of the meeting will be available within 48 hours of broadcast and will remain online for 12 months: <https://highland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

A separate memorandum will be issued if detailed or further instructions are required, or where the contents of the memorandum are confidential. Please arrange to take the required action based on this action note.

Committee Members Present:

Mr C Ballance	Mrs I MacKenzie (remote)
Mr D Fraser	Mr A MacKintosh
Mr L Fraser	Mr T MacLennan (remote)
Mr K Gowans	Ms D Macpherson (item 8.3 to end)
Mr A Graham (item 8.3 to end)	Mr P Oldham
Mr R Jones	Ms M Reid (remote)
Mr B Lobban	

Non-Committee Members Present: Mr M Gregson, Mr D McDonald, Mr M Baird

Substitutes: Mr J Grafton (for Ms L Saggars), Ms K Willis (for Ms S Fanet)

Officers participating:

Mr D Mudie, Area Planning Manager – South (DM)
 Mr J Kelly, Principal Planner (JK)
 Ms E Watt, Planner (EW)
 Ms J Mair, Planner (JM)
 Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)
 Mr I Meredith, Acting Principal Solicitor
 Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	<p>Appointment of Chair Suidheachadh de Chathraiche</p> <p>AGREED to appoint Mr P Oldham as Chair, Mr R Jones as Vice Chair, and Mr A MacKintosh as a Committee representative for the Planning Review Body.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan</p> <p>Mr M Cameron, Ms S Fanet, Ms L Saggars</p>	
		n/a
3	<p>Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt</p>	

	None.	n/a
4	Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais	
	There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 October 2024 which was APPROVED .	n/a
5	Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra	
	<p>There had been circulated Report No PLS/62/24 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the "Major" development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination.</p> <p>Members' attention was drawn to the consultation on Electricity Infrastructure Consenting in Scotland, which was due to close on 29 November 2024, and which would now be the subject of a report to full Council on 12 December 2024. This report would be considered by the SLG on 26 November and Members were invited to submit their comments to the Area Planning Manager by 22 November. The Convenor advised that following a request, the UK Government had indicated it would accept late submissions.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.</p>	DM
6	Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais	
6.1	<p>Description: Development of pumped storage hydro with storage capacity of up to 30,000 megawatt hours with up to 2,000 megawatts installed electrical generation capacity. Water will be pumped, via proposed tunnels, into and from turbines located between Loch Ness and Loch nam Breac Dearga. (24/04410/PAN) (PLS/063/24)</p> <p>Ward: 12 Applicant: AECOM Site Address: Land 2700m West of Inchtellach, Bunloit, Drumnadrochit</p> <p>Matters raised by Members included the need to consider the cumulative impact of various similar applications. Assurance was sought that the process for the consideration of community benefit was being discussed, noting it was not a material planning consideration.</p>	
	NOTED the application.	
6.2	<p>Description: Erection and operation of battery energy storage system with a storage capacity of up to 30MW and associated infrastructure (24/03762/PAN) (PLS/064/24)</p> <p>Ward: 18 Applicant: Anesco Ltd Site Address: Land 100M South of Blackpark House Nairn</p> <p>Concern was expressed at the cumulative impact of several battery energy</p>	

	storage systems in the vicinity. Guidance was still awaited on this type of application, with particular reference to the environmental impact of fires.	
	NOTED the application.	
7	Continued Item Cuspairean a' Leantainn	
	<p>Applicant: GF Job Ltd (20/04784/S42) (PLS/065/24) Location: Alvie Moor Quarry, Dalraddy Estate, Alvie, Kinncraig (Ward 20). Nature of Development: Section 42 application to amend conditions 1 & 4 of planning permission 11/04428/FUL (extension of time). Recommendation: Grant.</p> <p>The Clerk explained that although this was a continued application, a significant amount of time had passed since it had previously been considered in June 2021, therefore it was being presented as a new application and no Members were excluded from participating.</p>	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report, including the amendment of Condition 1 to read 2030 rather than 2026.	JK
8	Planning Applications to be Determined Iartasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
8.1	<p>Applicant: GF Job Ltd (24/02574/S42) (PLS/66/24) Location: Land 180M SW of Easter Delfour, Alvie, Kinncraig (Ward 20). Nature of Development: Application under S42 to develop land without compliance with (00/00279/FULBS Winning and working of stone and aggregate) conditions 1 to 4 to extend quarry operations for a further 5 years to 2030, updated extraction and restoration plan. Recommendation: Grant</p>	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report, but with the deletion of Condition 6 in recognition that northbound traffic can utilise the new access with the A9, following completion of the dualling works at this location.	JK
8.2	<p>Applicant: The Highland Council (23/05335/FUL) (PLS/67/24) Location: Former Golf Course, General Booth Road, Inverness (Ward 13). Nature of Development: Erection of 118 residential units, infrastructure, road Recommendation: Grant</p>	
	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report.	EW
8.3	<p>Applicant: The Highland Council (24/00370/FUL) (PLS/68/24) Location: Site directly adjacent to St Valery Avenue, Inverness (Ward 14). Nature of Development: Erection of 8No. 2 bedroomed, semi-detached houses. Recommendation: Grant</p> <p>Local Member, Michael Gregson, drew attention to the importance of the preliminary ecological appraisal.</p>	

	Agreed: to GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions recommended in the report, and taking into consideration the additional plan that had been provided as part of the presentation.	JM
9	Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division Co-dhùnadh mu larrtas do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir	
9.1	Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (PPA-270-2299) (23/00533/FUL) Location: Land at Drum Farm South of Fire Station Drumnadrochit IV63 6AH (Ward 12) Nature of Development: remix house types on land at Drum Farm.	
	NOTED the decision of the Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers to allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the thirty one conditions and advisory notes as listed in Annex A.	
9.2	Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (PPA-270-2299) (23/00533/FUL) Location: Land at Drum Farm South of Fire Station Drumnadrochit IV63 6AH (Ward 12) Nature of Development: Claim for expenses.	
	NOTED the decision of the Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers that the council has not acted in an unreasonable manner resulting in liability for expenses and, in exercise of the powers delegated to me, I decline to make any award.	
9.3	Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (PPA-270-2298) (23/00532/FUL) Location: land at Drum Farm, South of Fire Station, Drumnadrochit IV63 6AH (Ward 12) Nature of Development: remix house types on land at Drum Farm.	
	NOTED the decision of the Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers to allow the appeal and grant planning permission subject to the thirty conditions and advisory notes as listed in Annex A.	
9.4	Applicant: Springfield Properties PLC (PPA-270-2298) (23/00532/FUL) Location: Land at Drum Farm South of Fire Station Drumnadrochit IV63 6AH (Ward 12) Nature of Development: Claim for expenses.	
	NOTED the decision of the Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers that the council has not acted in an unreasonable manner resulting in liability for expenses and, in exercise of the powers delegated to me, I decline to make any award.	
	Closing Remarks The Area Planning Manager informed the Committee that an application by Intelligent Land Investments Group Plc for a battery energy storage facility at Fairways Business Park, Inverness, had been refused on appeal by Scottish Ministers. The application had been considered by full Council following a Notice of Amendment, and the appeal would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.	

	The Committee NOTED the position.	
	The meeting ended at 12pm.	

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
NORTH PLANNING APPLICATIONS
COMMITTEE

4 December 2024, 10.00AM

MINUTE / ACTION NOTE

Listed below are the decisions taken by Committee at their Microsoft Teams meeting and the actions that now require to be taken. The webcast of the meeting will be available within 48 hours of broadcast and will remain online for 12 months: <https://highland.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

A separate memorandum will be issued if detailed or further instructions are required, or where the contents of the memorandum are confidential. Please arrange to take the required action based on this action note.

Committee Members Present:

Ms S Atkin (except item 5.6)
Mr M Baird
Ms B Campbell
Ms L Dundas - remotely
Mr R Gale
Ms L Kraft
Mrs A MacLean - remotely
Ms J McEwan – remotely (item 5.3, 5.5 & 5.5)
Mr D Millar
Mr C Munro - remotely
Ms M Paterson (from item 5.3 onwards)
Mr M Reiss
Mr K Rosie
Ms M Smith

Non-Committee Members Present:

Mr J Edmondson
Ms M Hutchison
Mr S Coghill

Substitutes:

Mr A Jarvie (from item 5.5 onwards)

Apologies:

Mr R Bremner
Ms T Collier

Officers participating:

Mr D Jones, Area Planning Manager – North (DJ)
Mr P Wheelan-Strategic Projects Team Leader (PW)
Ms C Farmer-McEwan, Principal Planner (CF)
Mr L Burnside, Planner (LB)

Ms Karolina Slotwinska, Planner (KS)
 Mr M Clough, Senior Engineer, Transport Planning (MC)
 Ms R Banfro, Acting Principal Solicitor (Planning) and Clerk
 Ms R Ross, Committee Officer

ITEM NO	DECISION	ACTION
1	Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan	n/a
2	Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt	n/a
3	<p>Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais</p> <p>There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the action note and minute of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 October 2024 which was APPROVED.</p>	n/a
4	<p>Major Development Update Iartasan Mòra</p> <p>There had been circulated Report No PLN/086/24 by the Area Planning Manager - providing an update on progress of all cases within the "Major" development category currently with the Infrastructure and Environment Service for determination.</p> <p>The Committee NOTED the current position with the applications.</p>	PW
5	Planning Applications to be Determined Iartasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh	
5.1	<p>Applicant: Mey Energy Storage Limited (24/02621/S36) (PLN/087/24) Location: Land 700M East Of Woodlands, Mey (Ward 03). Nature of Development: Installation of a battery energy storage system and associated infrastructure with a generating capacity of up 300mw located on land at Phillips Mains Farm. Recommendation: RAISE an OBJECTION</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to DEFER the application to allow further discussions between the Council, the Applicant and Energy Consents Unit.</p>	LB
5.2	<p>Applicant: Telefonica UK Ltd (24/02726/FUL) (PLN/088/24) Location: Land 1615m NE of Kernsary, Poolewe (Ward 05). Nature of Development: Installation of 20m high lattice mast and ancillary apparatus within a fenced compound. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>Members, attention was drawn to the following correction to the report.</p>	David Borland

	<p>The reason for the recommendation should have read:-</p> <p>All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that, subject to the conditions suggested below, the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	
5.3	<p>Applicant: EE (24/01220/FUL) (PLN/089/24) Location: Land 2960M NE of 1 Kylestrome, Scourie (Ward 01). Nature of Development: Installation of 20m high lattice telecommunications tower and ancillary development. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>Members, attention was drawn to the following correction to the report.</p> <p>The reason for the recommendation should have read:-</p> <p>All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that, subject to the conditions suggested below, the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report</p>	David Borland
5.4	<p>Applicant: Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association (23/05538/PIP) (PLN/090/24) Location: Land 70M South of Lone Tree, Staffin Road, Portree, Isle Of Skye (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Erection of 34no. residential units and supporting infrastructure. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>Members' attention was drawn to the following corrections to the report:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in paragraph 8.32 (b) there should have been no reference to Q2,2022; • in terms of Appendix 2 and the Community Facilities Contributions reference should have been made to £53,312 and not £34,646; • the sum of £1,568 and not £1,019 should have been sought for each Residential Unit and indexation should refer to Q2, 2023 and not Q4,2023; and • on page 97 of the papers and in relation to the Appendix 2 for Road Improvements for the Portree Link Road, the sum of £4000 per Residential Unit should have been stated and there should have been no reference to indexation as detailed in the table. <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the amendments in respect of the developer contributions, subject to a section 75</p>	Graham Sharp

	agreement being concluded prior to the granting of planning permission and subject to the conditions detailed in the report.	
5.5	<p>Applicant: Wickman Hotels Ltd (24/01941/FUL) (PLN/091/24) Location: Budhmor House, Budhmor Place, Portree, Isle Of Skye (Ward 10). Nature of Development: Partial demolition of care home, erection of extension, change of use to apart-hotel accommodation, landscaping and associated infrastructure. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the conditions detailed in the report; • subject to the following additional condition: No development shall commence, including tree felling, site excavation or demolition, until a Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority, in accordance with BS5837:2012 (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction). This report shall be prepared and subsequently supervised by a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant approved by the planning authority. Reason: To ensure the protection of retained trees during construction and thereafter; and • subject to conditions relating to pedestrian refuge the wording of which to be delegated to officers in consultation with the Chair and local NPAC Ward Members. 	KS
5.6	<p>Applicant: Mr & Mrs R & D Walker (23/05941/FUL) (PLN/092/24) Location: Land to South of Roth-Ach, Gallowhill, Avoch (Ward 09). Nature of Development: Erection of house Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.</p>	CF
5.7	<p>Applicant: Fig Power (23/02840/FUL) (PLN/093/24) Location: Land 225M East Of Drumore Cottage, Swordale, Evanton (Ward 06) Nature of Development: Development of 49.9Mw battery storage with associated transformers and sub-station. Recommendation: GRANT</p> <p>Members' attention was drawn to the Community Council's representation that had originally been received by the Planning Authority but due to an administrative error been allocated as a third party representation rather than a representation from the Community Council.</p> <p>Motion from Cllr D Millar, seconded by Cllr K Rosie, to grant planning permission with the proposed amendment to condition 13 (d) and the addition of condition 22.</p> <p>Amendment from Cllr Gale seconded by Cllr Paterson:- Policy 67 of the HwLDP stipulates that proposals for renewable energy development must be closely aligned with the primary renewable resources essential for their operation. After reviewing the contents of the report, it is</p>	CF

	<p>evident that the applicant has not adequately demonstrated that the proposed development is sufficiently connected to the source of the primary renewable resource necessary to justify its need. Consequently, I conclude that this development does not comply with Policy 67 of the HwLDP.</p> <p>There were 9 votes for the motion and 5 votes for the amendment, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:</p> <p>For the motion:- Ms S Atkin, Ms I Campbell, Mr A Jarvie, Ms L Kraft, Ms A McLean, Mr D Millar, Mr C Munro, Mr K Rosie and Ms M Smith.</p> <p>For the amendment: - Mr M Baird, Ms L Dundas, Mr R Gale, Mrs M Paterson and Mr M Reiss.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED to GRANT the application subject to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the conditions detailed in the report; • the amended condition 13 (d) – includes at restriction on HGV traffic to a maximum of 4 HGV movements in and out of the site per day during construction; and • the addition of condition 22 – No development shall commence until a scheme has been submitted to, and approved by, the Planning Authority in conjunction with appropriate roads authority(s) identifying (and delivery) of all upgrades to the public road network to ensure that it is of a standard capable of accommodating construction-related traffic (including the formation and improvement of any junctions leading from the site to the public roads). <p>Reason To increase the structural integrity of the road to ensure that it is adequate to serve this development and to address the cumulative change in character of the existing road network as a result of this development and in the interests of road safety.</p>	
	<p>The meeting ended at 2.15 pm.</p>	

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **Harbours Management Board** held in **Committee Room 1** in the Council **Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness** on **Friday, 15 November 2024** at **10.30am**.

Present:-

Mr I Brown

Mr C Munro (Remote)

Mr M Green (Chair)

Mr R Stewart

Mrs M Hutchison (Remote)

Mrs T Robertson (Remote)

Mr H Morrison (Remote)

In attendance:-

Ms T Urry, Head of Roads & Infrastructure

Mr D Seddon, Acting Harbours Manager

Mr G Smith, Service Lead – Infrastructure

Mr A MacIver, Principal Engineer

Mrs O Marsh, Committee Officer

Preliminaries

The Chair reminded the Board that this was the last meeting for Mr D Seddon, Acting Harbours Manager, as he would officially retire on 30 January 2025. In this regard thanks were expressed for his hard work on behalf of the Highland Council, and the best wishes of all present at the meeting were conveyed to him for his retirement.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms J McEwan and Ms L Niven.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement

There were no Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

The Board **NOTED** the Minutes of Meeting of the Harbours Management Board held on the 31 May 2024.

4. Harbour Operations Income Monitoring to September 2024

There had been circulated Report No HMB/09/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- maintaining fuel costs to the bare minimum had encouraged boats to stay at KLB (kinlochbervie) rather than going to Scrabster or Ullapool;
- 3 French trawlers had been lost at Lochinver due to the fish migrating further north towards the Shetlands, however 2 trawlers had returned to the harbour recently and it was hoped that this would continue;
- the iceplant required some remedial works at KLB;
- it was stressed that the Harbour Board carry out some site visits to see the estate;
- the Kyle of Lochalsh fuel accelerator installation was welcomed as a successful innovative investment as there had already been a notable financial return;
- it was confirmed that KLB fuel supplies were brought in by road tankers, but it was queried if there were plans to install means of bringing fuel in by sea, such as finger jetties. In this regard it was confirmed that a proposal would be discussed with the Harbours Manager and brought back to a future board meeting;
- as the Kyle of Lochalsh fuel accelerator had been a success, it was queried if there were plans to emulate this across the harbour estate to maximise on additional income;
- it was queried what level of investment was required to make fuel tanks in the harbours estate large enough to accommodate sea tankers; and
- it was requested that the report should list every port and itemise every point of sale within an appendix to compare sales and consumption across the estate. The report should also contain historical figures from the previous year. In this regard it was highlighted that there had been presumable fuel sales in Portree and Uig but they had not been listed.

The Board;-

- i. **NOTED** the Harbours Operations Trading Account figures in Appendix 1 of the report;
- ii. **AGREED** to bring a proposal to the next meeting regarding options to bring fuel in by sea; and
- iii. **AGREED** to include within the next report a list of ports and itemise every point of fuel sale and the previous years data within an appendix.

5. Uig Harbour Redevelopment – Update Report

There had been circulated Report No HMB/10/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

In amplification of the report Mr A MacIver, Principal Engineer gave a presentation on the new terminal building and updated on the projects progress. The presentation included an update on the construction of the new vessels MV Lochmor and MV Claymore, the construction of new infrastructure, the impact of damage from Storm Ashley, and the upcoming Community Council meeting. In addition, it was also confirmed that the existing toilet facility would be closed until a permanent solution could be engineered for its sewage waste, and an alternative toilet in the waiting shelter would be used on a temporary basis.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- it was queried what the new heating source would be in the harbour terminal;
- reassurance was sought that the terminals insulation material would be up to standard and help prevent heat loss;
- funding was an area of concern in view of ongoing discussions with Transport Scotland. In this regard it was confirmed that no decision had been communicated yet but it was anticipated shortly;
- assurance was sought that the harbour master toilet was not longer in use due to the inappropriate sewage disposal. In this regard it was confirmed that it would be closed and locked up imminently with assurance brought back to the next meeting;
- on the back of a recent power outage in north Skye, the linkspan generator had not activated automatically and assurances were sought that this had been investigated and resolved;
- regarding attending and supporting the liaison groups meetings, special commendation was expressed to the officers for their hard work over the last 2.5 years, especially as they had attended meetings during late afternoon and evening times before travelling back to Inverness thereafter;
- Members requested an updated on the options which would be presented to the Community Council at next week's meeting;
- it was queried what contractor had been appointed to carry out the work to the pier head and rubbing strip, and it was also queried who had designed the walkway;
- the new lighting was welcomed and was deemed appropriate and not over illuminated. In this regard it was also confirmed that the residents complaint had been addressed and the lights were still running at the required standard; and
- it was queried if the walkway design should have factored out the recent storm damage as older piers had been designed with columns to allow water to pass underneath. In this regard it was queried if the walkway failed in a storm in 5 years time, who would pay for the repairs.

The Board **NOTED** the position and **AGREED** to shut the harbour master toilet and bring assurances to the next meeting.

6. Cruise Ships in Highland Harbours

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

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- regarding the coordination and manoeuvring of 20 coaches at Portree harbour to disembark the large cruise ships, health and safety was confirmed as of paramount importance for the public and operators. It was highlighted that this issue would be escalated internally for discussion;

- it was confirmed that if a cruise ship was put off visiting a port it would prove very challenging to get them to return in the future, and this would affect revenue income;
- it was queried if elements of the levelling up fund application to upgrade the pier could be reviewed with a view to actioning financially economical aspects to improve health and safety, such as reviewing the use of Bayfield car park. It was also confirmed that the Council owned Sconser quarry for raw building materials;
- it was suggested that the Council consider stipulating best practice for disembarkation rather than the cruise ships desired process;
- it was queried if cruise ship waste was managed according to Council guidelines or disposed of at landfill sites;
- further information was sought, and provided, if it was solely the pier aspect which had been problematic for health and safety during cruise ship disembarkation;
- it was confirmed that the Board's duty was to flag up the health and safety issues and seek professional guidance and a comprehensive report from the Development and Infrastructure team; and
- clarification was sought, and provided, regarding the planned repairs and timeframe to Portree harbour and KLB.

The Board **NOTED** the cruise ship operations and support our ongoing efforts in this as an income source.

7. CalMac Ferry Income 2024

There had been circulated Report No HMB/12/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- it was felt that the Council had been poor with the common-sense approach and joined up thinking in view of summer and winter staff recruitment. In this regard it was queried if consideration should be given to recruiting fulltime staff with the right skillset for summer and winter duties and retain them. However, it was confirmed that in other departments the Council were seeking to support fulltime posts with staff who could undertake summer and winter duties, and this should be considered for Harbours;
- it was felt that investment of income should be spent on local staff to maintain the Harbour assets on and around Skye and would contribute to a good public perception of local investment; and
- attention was drawn to the importance of Members visiting Harbours to gain a better understanding of the operations to feedback comments to officers.

The Board **NOTED** the figures within Appendix 1 of the report.

The meeting ended at 11:40am

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the Inverness and **Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Monitoring Group** held in **Leader's Meeting Room, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness** on **Tuesday 3 December 2024** at **2pm**.

Present:-

Mr K Gowans
Mr S Kennedy
Mr D Louden
Mr G MacKenzie

Mrs A MacLean
Mrs M Reid
Mrs T Robertson
Mr R Stewart

In attendance:-

Mrs S Armstrong, Chief Officer - Revenues and Commercialisation
Mr A Maguire, Head of Development and Regeneration
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager
Mr D Chisholm, Tourism & Inward Investment Team Leader
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager
Mrs O Marsh, Committee Officer

Also in attendance:-

Mr C MacPherson, Chief Executive, ICF Green Freeport

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs H Crawford and Mr M Green.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement

There were no Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements.

3. Update on Key Works Streams

There had been circulated Report No ICF/05/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

Progress and Current Status

For the benefit of new Members to the Group the background of the Freeport was set out. Next steps would be the signing of the Memorandum of Association between the UK Government, Scottish Government, Highland Council and the Freeport. Whilst the change of UK Government had impacted the progress timeline, the UK Government were supportive of the Freeport initiative. Successful seed funding applicants had been asked to provide revised programs for the spending of their projects over 3 years. It was hoped

that there would be a level of flexibility in the seed funding process to engage a substitute project if required, although these would still be subject to planning applications and environmental impact assessments.

The NDR (non-domestic rates) valuations had been submitted to the SG in September 2024.

Wider Development Planning Status

There had been positive discussions with the Scottish Government about the principle of using master plan consent areas and there was a call for sites exercise confirmed to commence in January 2025. The delivery programme would provide the most up to date delivery profile across all sites as part of the Local Development Plan and would inform the Council on internal resourcing to process the applications as there had been delays previously. Consultation with communities must be planned and undertaken carefully. Master plan consent areas were an alternative to a normal planning application process which had been introduced by the Scottish Government and were anticipated to be more user friendly and streamlined. Officers were praised for their fast and hard work in delivering this vision to better the Highlands but caution was stressed to not underestimate the challenges ahead in delivering the projects and providing needed housing.

Workforce for the Future/Skills update

Officers had produced a series of podcasts for parents to inform them of opportunities for their children if they sought vocational careers and updated them on trades opportunities for the next 10 years or so. The Council had pursued the Scottish Government to highlight the need for additional funded training places for young people wanting to pursue their education in the Highlands. It was felt that more young persons were seeking apprenticeships in Highland than leaving to attend Universities. It was felt that talent attraction had to be incorporated within the process to meet the needs of the projects, and Members had their part to play to reach out to the national representatives for support.

Communication & engagement work

The First Minister and the Scottish Affairs Select Committee had been to Highland and the Council had engaged with them to promote the projects. Council delegates were going to Whitehall in London to promote the projects to MPs and senior civil servants and it was felt that cross-party Council engagement and communication was key to achieve delivery. There had been webinars, podcasts and online explanations of the latest news to inform communities but a more structured communication plan would be pursued. An Ardersier bespoke project communications meeting would be planned with local Members.

The Group **NOTED**:-

- i. the progress with the Full Business Case; and
- ii. the updates on other key work streams and development proposals associated with the Green Freeport.

The meeting ended at 3pm.

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City Region Deal Monitoring Group** held remotely on Tuesday 4 February 2025 at 2.30pm.

Present:

Mr I Brown	Mr K Gowans (Chair)
Mr A Christie	Mrs M Reid
Mr D Fraser	Mrs T Robertson

Officials in attendance:

Mr M Bailey, Programme Manager (City Region Deal)
Ms A Macrae, Senior Committee Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr J Bruce, Mr M Green, Ms L Niven, Mr R Stewart.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements

There were no declarations of interest or transparency statements.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated the Minutes of the City Region Deal Monitoring Group held on 24 October 2024, the terms of which were **NOTED**.

4. UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Delivery Plan Progress Update

There was circulated Report No. CRD/01/25 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place which provided the latest update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Delivery Plan.

The Group **NOTED** the UKSPF Delivery Plan progress update.

5. Inverness & Highland City Region Deal Programme Report - 2024/25 Quarter 2

There was circulated Report No. CRD/02/25 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place which provided the 24/25 Quarter 3 update for the Inverness & Highland City Region Deal (IHCRD).

The Group **NOTED** the 2024/25 Quarter 3 update for the Inverness & Highland City Region Deal.

6. IHCRD Key Risks, Challenges & Opportunities

The Programme Manager gave a verbal update on the Inverness & Highland City Region Deal Key Risks, Challenges & Opportunities during which he provided details of the Change Request to be submitted to Scottish/UK Governments seeking approval to extend delivery timescales for specific projects beyond the Deal end date of March 2027. There were challenges around some projects

being sustainable entities beyond the end of the Deal, and officers were working closely with the Scottish and UK Governments on this issue. He also provided an update on progress towards having a well-developed prospectus for projects ready for delivery as the UK Government set out their approach to Growth Deals following the conclusion of their budget review in the Spring.

In discussion, concern was expressed at the costs of sustaining projects beyond the end of the Deal and it was requested that a report be brought to the Group providing information on the specific projects involved. The Programme Manager undertook to bring a report to the next meeting in this regard.

Thereafter, the Group **NOTED** the update.

The meeting concluded at 2.42pm.