



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held in Council Chamber/MS Teams, Council Offices, Stornoway on Tuesday 8 March at 3.00pm.

PRESENT

Mr Donald Crichton (Chair)	Mr Angus McCormack
Mr Norman MacDonald (Vice-Chair)	Mr Iain M Macaulay
Mr Calum Macmillan	Mr Neil Mackay
Mr Iain A MacNeil	Mr Gordon Murray
Mr Roddy Mackay	Mr Roddie Mackay
Mr Uisdean Robertson	Mr John A Maciver
Mr Grant Fulton	
Mr Norman A MacDonald	

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Paul Steele	Mr Angus Morrison
Mr Iain M Macleod	Mr Rae Mackenzie
Mr John G Mitchell	Mr Kenny John Macleod

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Calum Iain Maciver	Mrs Fiona Maciver
Mr Joe Macphee	Mr Tim Langley
Mrs Anne Macdonald	Mr Nigel Scott
Mrs Mairi Maciver	Mrs Isla Macarthur
Miss Mairi Sine MacDonald	Mr Murdo Morrison
Mr Peter Worsdale (External Audit)	

Prayer

The Meeting was preceded in prayer by Mr John A Maciver.

MINUTES

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| Minute of Meeting of 2 February 2022 | 1 | The Minute of Meeting of 2 February 2022 was approved . |
| Minute of Meeting of 22 February 2022 | 2 | The Minute of Meeting of 22 February 2022 was approved . |
| Declaration of Interest | 3 | There were no declarations of interest. |

RENEWABLE ENERGY

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| Support for ScotWind Offshore Wind | 4 | With reference to item 4 of the Minute of Meeting of 22 September 2021 the Director for Communities submitted a Report seeking delegated authority to develop ideas around support infrastructure for the ScotWind Offshore Wind deployment north and west of Lewis. The Report stated that ScotWind Lease Options for Hebridean Areas N2, N3 and N4 were now in place and there was growing certainty around how Offshore Wind would develop around the Outer Hebrides. Two developers had been awarded Lease Options and both were committed to work closely with the Comhairle and the community to deliver mutual benefit. |
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The Report further stated that developers were looking to identify and plan shore-side support facilities for their ScotWind deployments and required the support of the Comhairle in identifying candidate locations and liaising with the local supply chain and community. Studies had been carried out in this area in the past but needed to be refreshed and augmented prior to the first full business meetings of the new Comhairle.

The proposal that Scottish and Southern Energy be allowed to take power from offshore windfarms direct to a hub at Dounreay in Caithness was discussed. This would significantly disadvantage the Outer Hebrides case for a 600mw interconnector and had major implications for the islands which could lead to losing out on most of the economic benefits. Representations had been made to the National Grid, SSE, Ofgem, the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Energy and the UK Energy Minister. The Committee agreed that representations should continue in earnest over the following period and the current Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) allowed an opportunity to make the argument to take generation ashore in the Outer Hebrides which would be the preferred option of the developers as the lease holders.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle:

- (1) note the outcome of the recent ScotWind Offshore Wind Leasing Round; and**
- (2) approve delegated authority to the Director for Communities to commission research and technical studies to inform the development of shore-side infrastructure for the emerging Offshore Wind sector in a way that maximises on-island supply chain and socioeconomic benefit.**

PLANNING

Draft Development 5
Planning
Regulations
Consultation

With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 25 September 2019 the Head of Economic Development and Planning submitted a Report seeking delegation to conclude the Comhairle's response to the consultation on Draft Local Development Planning – Regulations and Guidance. The Report stated that the consultation was seeking views on the secondary legislative requirements and the draft guidance to stakeholders on implementing the future local development plan system. The consultation documents had been prepared and the Scottish Government was inviting views on the proposals by the consultation closing date of 31 March 2022.

The Report further stated that a number of recurrent issues had arisen for the Comhairle in relation to Planning Reform and the response to this consultation would endeavour to ensure these points had been addressed. The key points to note were outlined in section 6 of the Report and were in relation to additional duties; urban bias; lack of detail/direction; strategic priorities; Islands communities impact assessment; and scheduling.

The consultation response would include commentary to reinforce discussion points by the Committee on the Comhairle's commitment to develop rural housing and energy development projects.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle:

- (1) note the consultation on the draft Local Development Planning – Regulations and Guidance, and the emerging Comhairle response; and**
- (2) authorise the Head of Economic Development and Planning to conclude the Comhairle's response to the consultation.**

Draft National 6
Planning
Framework
Consultation

With reference to Item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 25 September 2019 the Head of Economic Development and Planning submitted a Report seeking delegation to conclude the Comhairle's response to the consultation on draft National Planning Framework 4 (NPF). The Report stated that the draft NPF4 had been published for public consultation and laid before Parliament for its scrutiny, until end of March 2022. The NPF was a long-term plan for Scotland that set out where development and infrastructure was needed and, looking forward to 2045, NPF4 would guide spatial development, set out national planning policies, designate national developments and highlight regional spatial priorities and will have statutory status.

The Report outlined the NPF, the Comhairle's contribution to the preparation of NPF, its evidence base and supporting documents, and highlighted the emerging headline issues and commentary that would inform the Comhairle's response to the consultation. Whilst the Comhairle response recognised the positive intent for rural and island areas, the draft NPF was weak on delivery and largely focussed on more urbanised areas. Despite the significant work that had been undertaken with other local authorities and stakeholders on the precursor indicative regional spatial strategy work, the spatial strategy in the draft NPF which placed us in the North West region did not best or reflect the potential or opportunities for our area. The response would seek to strengthen regional recognition in the draft NPF and would suggest how policies could be better set out to meet the development context in the islands.

The Report detailed that aligned to this response the Comhairle was preparing a joint representation on behalf of the Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership, who shared the Comhairle's concerns on the lack effective recognition of the region's potential in NPF, and how underwhelming the document was against its stated outcomes to support the rural and island communities. Concern had also been highlighted at the resource and budgetary implications for planning authorities to undertake new and additional duties required under secondary legislations emanating from the Planning Act and the NPF.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle:

- (1) note the consultation on the draft National Planning Framework and the emerging Comhairle response; and**
- (2) authorise the Head of Economic Development and Planning to conclude the Comhairle's response to the consultation.**

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Reports 7
Outstanding

The Chief Executive submitted a Report detailing the reports outstanding arising from the decisions of the Committee.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the Report.