



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting held in Council Chamber,
Council Offices, Stornoway on Tuesday,
4 February 2025 at 2.00pm.

PRESENT

Mr Donald F Crichton (Chair)	Mr John Norman Macleod
Mr Norrie Macdonald (Vice-Chair)	Mr Kenneth Macleod
Mr Iain A MacNeil	Mr Donald Macsween
Mr Paul Steele	Mr John A Maciver
Mr Mustapha Hocine	Mr Duncan MacInnes MBE
Mr Uisdean Robertson	Mr Gordon Murray
Mr Kenny M Macleod	Mr Rae Mackenzie
Mr Robert Mackenzie	Mr Angus McCormack
Mr Angus Morrison	Dr Frances Murray
Mr Norman Macdonald	

APOLOGIES

Mr Iain M Macaulay

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Kenneth J Maclean	Mr Calum Maclean
Mr Iain M Macleod	Mr Malcolm K Macdonald
Mr Paul Finnegan	Mr Finlay M Stewart

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs Anne Murray	Mr Tim Langley
Mr John Cunningham	Mr Colin G Morrison
Mr Iain Watson	Mrs Dolina Macleod
Ms Angela C Smith	Mr Derek Mackay
Mrs Shona Hadwen	Mrs Fiona Maciver
Mr Steven Ferguson	Mrs Linda Cunningham
Mrs Mairi Maciver	Ms Seonaid McDonald
Mr Sandy Gomez	Mr Murdo Mackay (DEV)
Ms Caitriona MacCuish	Ms Ashley Ferrier
Mrs Katie Macaskill	Ms Isabel MacLachlan
Mrs Anne Macdonald	Mrs Isla Macarthur
Ms Morag Ferguson	Ms Mary Ann Graham
Ms Samantha Ferrer	

Prayer

The Meeting was preceded in prayer by Mr Angus Morrison.

MINUTES

Minute of Meeting of 26 November 2024 1

The Minute of Meeting of 26 November 2024 was **approved**.

Declaration of Interest of 2

There were no declarations of interest.

PRESENTATION

SSEN Transmission
Presentation

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The Chairman welcomed representatives from Scottish and Southern Energy Networks (SSEN) to the meeting who gave a presentation to the Committee covering background information on the roles and responsibilities of SSEN-T and providing an overview on the following points:

- Western Isles – Integrated supply chain
- Western Isles Project Update
- Feedback and updates to site plans following partner and community events
- Key highlights of design progression
- Photorealistic views of the proposals
- Project Timeline and Start up Activities
- Local Impacts and Community Benefits
- Worker Accommodation and Legacy
- Western Isles Connections Projects Update
- Current Transmission Network
- Uisenis Windfarm Connection & Balallan
- Stornoway Wind Farm Connections
- Stornoway GSP Upgrade

Members were afforded the opportunity to ask questions and make contributions. On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the SSEN-T representatives for their attendance and for the informative and detailed presentation.

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

ENERGY

UK Government
Consultation:
Electricity
Infrastructure
Consenting

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The Chief Planning Officer submitted a Report seeking homologation of a response submitted to the UK Government's Consultation on Electricity Infrastructure Consenting in Scotland as the response deadline fell out with the Committee Series. The Report stated that the UK Government had published a consultation on the reserved matter of Electricity Infrastructure Consenting in Scotland. There was the perception that elements of the Scottish infrastructure consenting system were outdated and no longer fit for purpose and, through this consultation, the UK Government were seeking views on reform of the Scottish system to align with the recently modernised English and Welsh systems.

The Comhairle response was provided in the Appendix to the Report and the key points were highlighted in the Report.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle homologate the response submitted to the UK Government's Consultation on Electricity Infrastructure Consenting in Scotland.

UK Parliamentary
Scottish Affairs
Committee: Call for
Evidence

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The Chief Planning Officer submitted a Report seeking homologation of a response submitted to the UK Parliament's Scottish Affairs Committee in respect of its Call for Evidence on GB Energy and the Net Zero Transition as the response deadline fell out with the Committee Series. The Report stated that the UK Parliament's Scottish Affairs Committee visited the Comhairle on 10 December 2024 where presentations were made on the Outer Hebrides context, key areas of UK Government support and Renewable Energy opportunities across the islands.

The Comhairle's response to the Call for Evidence was provided in the Appendix to the Report and the key points were highlighted in the Report.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle homologate the response submitted to the UK Parliament’s Scottish Affairs Committee’s Call for Evidence on GB Energy and the Net Zero Transition.

The Chair gave his apologies left the meeting. The Vice-Chair chaired the remainder of the meeting.

HOUSING

Strategic Housing
Investment Plan
2025/26-2029/30 6

With reference to item 4 of the Minute of Meeting of 19 September 2023 the Chief Planning Officer submitted a Report providing an update on the development of the proposed Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) for the period 2025/26-2030/31. The Report stated that the Comhairle was required to submit a SHIP to the Scottish Government on an annual basis. The purpose of the SHIP was to set out the Comhairle’s Affordable Housing investment priorities over a five-year period, as informed by the objectives of the Local Housing Strategy and detailed the number of new housing units proposed, the likely cost of providing these units and the likely funding sources involved.

The Report set out the process followed in developing the SHIP and highlighted a number of factors and challenges that had been considered in the preparation of this year’s SHIP. The Appendix to the Report set out a proposed SHIP for consideration.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle

- (1) note the contents of the Report; and,**
- (2) authorise the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Sustainable Development Committee, to finalise the Strategic Housing Investment Plan and submit to the Scottish Government.**

HERITAGE

It was agreed that the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 & 14 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 namely, information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of, or a particular office holder or former office holder, or applicant to become an office holder under, the Comhairle; and any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime related to Appendix 7 to the Report only.

Museum Service
Update 7

With reference to item 5 of the Minute of Meeting of 26 November 2024 the Chief Officer, Economic and Community Regeneration submitted a Report seeking approval of the Museum nan Eilean policies and plans which required to be updated as part of the Museum Accreditation Return and also to seek approval to disperse display cases to Comainn Eachdraidh. The Report stated that Museum nan Eilean operated two accredited museums and in March 2024, the Accreditation status of both museums was reduced, by Museum Galleries Scotland, to Provisional Accreditation for 12 months, principally as a result of the effects of the cyber-attack on the service. The need for suitable staffing levels in line with national standards for the delivery of a museum service was also highlighted. Responses to, or resolution of, actions identified by the Accreditation Panel must be reported to Museums Galleries Scotland by March 2025.

The Report further stated that in order to meet loan requirements for national loans, Museum nan Eilean had purchased new display cases that would ensure ability to borrow artefacts and touring exhibitions from national institutions for the next 10 years. The old cases, although no longer fit for meeting these stringent conditions, were still useable

and could be reused by other local heritage groups who do not need to meet national loan conditions.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle approves:

- (1) the Museum Forward Plan at Appendix 1 to the Report;**
- (2) the plans and policy documents for the Comhairle's Museum Service at Appendices 2-9 to the Report; and**
- (3) dispersal of obsolete museum display cases to Comainn Eachdraich.**

The Lewis Museum Trust 8

The Chief Officer, Economic and Community Regeneration submitted a Report seeking approval for the proposed transfer of title of the collection and other assets of the Lewis Museum Trust to Museum nan Eilean. The Report stated that the Lewis Museum Society ("the Society") held a collection of items of historical and cultural value. In 1991, the collection and other assets of the Society were transferred to the newly established Lewis Museum Trust ("the Trust"), and the collection was loaned to Museum nan Eilean, where it had remained ever since. The Trust was now being wound up and asked that the Comhairle take ownership of the collection and the remaining assets.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle approves the proposed receipt of the collections and remaining assets of the Lewis Museum Trust on terms to be agreed by the Chief Executive.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Outer Hebrides Economic Regeneration Strategy 2025-35 9

With reference to 8 of the Minute of Meeting of 26 November 2024 the Chief Officer, Economic and Community Regeneration submitted a Report seeking approval of the draft Outer Hebrides Economic Strategy 2025-2035, prior to further consultation and finalisation. The Report stated that the Comhairle had approved the Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership (HIREP) Strategy in November 2024 and agreed that it would be appropriate to refresh the Outer Hebrides Economic Regeneration Strategy to reflect current and anticipated opportunities and challenges, and to align with the HIREP Strategy, the Scottish Government's National Strategy for Economic Transformation, and the Comhairle's Corporate Strategy 2022-27.

The proposed Outer Hebrides Economic Strategy 2025-35 was provided at Appendix 1 to the Report and set out how the Comhairle would seek to work with community, public and private sector partners to support the realisation of these opportunities. The strategy set out a vision for 2035 of an Outer Hebrides which was thriving, prosperous and sustainable, proposed what success against this vision would look like over the next decade, and suggested two overarching measurements of progress relating to population and productivity. Activity was focused against 3 key themes: Key Sectors, People and Community, and Infrastructure, with priority areas and actions identified within these themes. It was proposed to undertake external consultation on the strategy document, following which approval from Members on the final version would be sought at the April series.

It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle approve the draft Outer Hebrides Economic Strategy 2025-2035 at Appendix 1 to the Report, noting that following further consultation, a final version will be submitted for approval.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Reports Outstanding	10	The Chief Executive submitted a Report detailing the Reports Outstanding arising from the decisions of the Committee
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It was agreed to recommend that the Comhairle note the Report

