

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub Committee** held in the 1st Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Monday, 10 November 2014 at 9.15 am.

Present:

Mr A Christie (in the Chair)
Mr R Laird
Mrs B McAllister

Mr T Prag
Mr A Graham
Mr G Ross
Mrs J Slater

Officials in Attendance:

Mr S Wardlaw, Ward Manager
Mr C Stephen, Ward Manager
Ms L Lee, Committee Administrator
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant

Mr A Christie in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs H Carmichael and Mrs G Sinclair.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Committee **NOTED** the following declarations of interest:-

Item 7, Booklet C - Supplementary Paper (7) – Mr A Graham (financial)

3. Exclusion of Public

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50(A) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following items on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

4. Requests for Financial Assistance 2014/15

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/16/14 dated 31 October 2014 by the Inverness City Manager which listed the applications received for financial assistance from the Inverness Common Good Fund.

In this connection, there had been circulated separately a copy of the applications and supporting documentation as Booklets A and B, together with a supplementary paper dated 6 November 2014.

Prior to discussion of the applications, Mr Wardlaw gave an assurance that the awards made in previous years were being systematically worked through and that there ought to be fewer forward commitments in the next financial years. In response to a question, he undertook to provide an update to the next meeting on the payment of funds awarded to Inverness Leisure for Purchase of Medals for the City of Inverness Commonwealth Games Event.

Consideration was given to the applications listed in updated Appendices attached to the supplementary paper.

Booklet A

The Sub Committee determined applications for funding of up to £10,000 as follows:

Inverness Church Action with the Unemployed (£3,000 sought)
Launchpad – Grants for the unemployed: **AGREED** £1,000

Planefield Road Bowling Club (£3,610 sought)
Automated irrigation watering system: **DEFERRED**
Further information sought on the applicant's proposals for encouraging youth and community participation.

SNAP (Special Needs Action Project) (£400 sought)
Christmas Activities: **AGREED** £400

Ness Bank Church: (£5,000 requested)
Riverside Lunch Club at Ness Bank: **AGREED** £5,000

Velocity Café and Bicycle Workshop Ltd: (£9,186 sought)
Velocity "GoByCycle" outreach project: **AGREED** £9,186
Applicants to be encouraged to include all local schools in areas of multiple deprivation in their outreach work.

Advocacy Highland (£2,000 sought)
Reasonable alternations to disabled access: **AGREED** £2,000

Booklet B

The Sub Committee **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee at its meeting on 2 December 2014 approval of applications for more than £10,000 as follows:-

Highland Rugby Football Club
Community Rugby Development
Programme 2015-17:

RECOMMENDATION £10,000

Applicants to be invited to submit an Outcome Report after the first year of the Programme.

Merkinch Community Centre
Refurbishment project:

QUALIFIED RECOMMENDATION £15,000

Recommend approval of match funding if the pending application to the Resources Committee for £15,000 from the Capital Discretionary Fund is approved.

5. Operation Respect – City Centre

Declaration of Interest -

Mrs J Slater declared a non-financial interest in relation to part of this item on the grounds of being a member of the Inverness Community Safety Partnership, but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.

Members were advised that the City of Inverness Area Committee had previously endorsed the planned activities of Operation Respect – City Centre.

In this connection, there had been circulated Report No. GSC/17/14 dated 29 October 2014 by the Inverness City Manager which invited approval of a contribution from the Inverness Common Good Fund to the funding for activities in regard to the Project for Winter 2014/15.

Comments made in discussion included that proposals for metal scanners in pubs were not warranted, and that the amounts involved in various items of expenditure for Street Pastor operations might usefully be reviewed with the Street Pastors. Confirmation was also sought on the NHS Highland financial commitment to the Operation.

The Sub Committee **APPROVED** funding of £7998.00 from the Inverness Common Good Fund for Operation Respect 2014/15, subject to comments made in discussion being passed on to the relevant bodies.

6. Lighting Up the Bridge and Castle

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/18/14 dated 16 October 2014 by the Inverness City Manager which invited consideration of the increasing requests from charities to light up the Castle and the Bridge.

In response to questions raised, Members were advised that the costs (£400 for the castle, £70 for the bridge) were due to the labour involved in changing the lighting filters, and that any costs which the Council agreed to bear would be charged to the City Promotions cost centre.

Comments raised in discussion included:

- the messages or brands portrayed by the lighting schemes needed to be simple and easily understood – complex brands were unlikely to be suitable
- the cause should be meaningful to Inverness, either a local concern or a national/international cause
- lighting displays improved the appearance of the City, but were only effective in the winter months
- requests for lighting were increasing
- charities might be asked to meet the Council's costs of the lighting.

The Sub Committee **AGREED** that:

- i. lighting requests be considered on an ad hoc basis by the Inverness City Manager in consultation with the Chair and the Provost; and
- ii. demand for lighting and the costs of displays continue to be monitored, with a report brought to a future meeting of the Sub Committee.

7. Civic Hospitality Requests

Declarations of Interest

Being acquainted with a number of Inner Wheel members, Mr T Prag declared a non-financial interest in this application, but having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement in the discussion; he nonetheless took no part in the discussion of this application.

As a member and honorary Chieftain of the Gaelic Society of Inverness, Mr A Graham declared a financial interest and left the room whilst the request from MG Alba Traditional Music Awards was discussed.

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/19/14 dated 16 October 2014 by the Inverness City Manager which listed the applications received for Civic Hospitality from the Inverness Common Good Fund.

In this connection, there had been circulated a copy of the applications and supporting documentation as Booklet C together with supplementary paper dated 7 November 2014, **and at Agenda Item 9.**

The Sub Committee determined applications for civic hospitality as follows:

Inverness Business Improvement District

Inverness 2014 Best Bar None Awards – request for £500 **AGREED**
towards cost of evening function at Mercure Hotel
(December 2014)

<u>Clan Mackenzie Society of Scotland and the UK</u> Clan Mackenzie International Gathering – request for drinks reception with buffet at the Town House (August 2015)	AGREED
<u>Inner Wheel District 1</u> Inner Wheel District 1 rally – request for financial contribution with drinks reception at Kingsmills Hotel (May 2016)	REFUSED (Applicants to be asked to reapply, specifying the sum requested.)
<u>Visit of 78th Fraser Highlanders to Scotland</u> Request for Civic Reception at the Town House (April 2015)	AGREED
<u>The Art Society of Inverness</u> Request for free let of the Town House hall for Art Society Exhibition (July 2015)	AGREED
<u>Visit to Scotland by Russian Veteran Survivors of Arctic Convoys</u> Request for civic reception at the Town House (December 2014)	AGREED
<u>MG Alba Traditional Music Awards</u> Request for buffet and drinks at the Town House (December 2014)	AGREED
<u>International Union for the Conservation of Nature UK</u> Peatland Programme Conference - request for civic buffet at the Town House (October 2014)	HOMOLOGATED

Following points made in discussion, and aside from consideration of the request for civic hospitality, the Sub Committee **NOTED** that Officers would make contact with the Art Society of Inverness with regard to how they engaged with young people/schools, with a view to encouraging participation.

8. Castle of Mey Trustees – Application for Retrospective Support

Members were reminded that the Sub Committee had given approval for a Civic Reception for the Castle of Mey Trustees which had been held on 15 May 2014. In this regard, the Trustees had been under a misapprehension that all costs, including marketing, were included as part of the award.

In this connection, there had been circulated Report No. GSC/20/14 by the Inverness City Manager which invited consideration of an exceptional request for a contribution to these costs.

In full discussion, comments were made regarding the public not understanding the difference between the Inverness Common Good Fund and Highland Council, which could lead to difficulties; and that, in addition, all future award

letters should clearly state the amount of award and where the monies had come from, as well as stating that Civic Hospitality was restricted to the provision of food and associated catering services, as proposed in paragraph 3.2 of the report. Whilst it was accepted that the terms of the award letter could have been misinterpreted, Members were nonetheless generally minded that, on principle, the request should not be acceded to.

The Sub Committee **NOTED** the particular circumstances of the request and the changes to be made to the process to prevent a re-occurrence, and **AGREED not** to make an exceptional one-off payment to the Castle of Mey Trustees.

9. Date of Next Meeting - and Dates for Meetings in 2015

The Sub Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday, 9 February 2014 at 9.15 am, and **AGREED** the following dates for meetings in 2015:

Monday, 11 May
Monday, 17 August
Monday, 9 November

The meeting ended at 10.05 a.m.