

**City of Inverness Area Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub Committee** held in the Chamber, Town House, Inverness on Monday, 11 May, 2015 at 9.15 am.

**Present:**

Mrs H Carmichael  
Mr A Christie  
Mr A Graham  
Mr R Laird  
Mrs B McAllister

Mr T Prag  
Mr G Ross  
Mrs G Sinclair  
Mrs J Slater

**Officials in Attendance:**

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Manager  
Mr S Wardlaw, Ward Manager, Chief Executive's Office  
Ms L Lee, Committee Administrator, Corporate Development  
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, Finance Service

**Mr A Christie in the Chair**

**Business**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

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

Item 4 – Mr A Christie and Mrs J Slater, (both non-financial)

Item 5 – Mr A Christie (financial and non-financial), Mrs B McAllister, Ms G Sinclair, Mr A Graham and Mr T Prag, (all non-financial)

Item 7 – Mr T Prag (non-financial)

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**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. Deprived Area Fund**

**Declarations of Interest -**

- **Mr A Christie declared a non-financial interest as General Manager and Company Secretary of Inverness, Badenoch & Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureau, 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 him from taking part in the discussion.**

- **Mrs J Slater declared a non-financial interest as she had held discussions with Hilton Parish Church in the initial stages of their application, 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.**

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/07/15 dated 28 April 2015 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure and the City and Area Manager. The report confirmed the decisions taken on the Deprived Area Fund for 2015-16 using the authority delegated to the City Manager at the City Committee on 5 March 2015. This fully expended the funding available in 2015-16.

The Sub Committee **NOTED** the decisions made using delegated powers and the final distribution of the Deprived Area Funds for 2015-16.

## **5. Requests for Financial Assistance 2014/15**

### **Declarations of Interest -**

**Mr A Christie declared a financial interest, as a Director of the Parent Organisation of BlindCraft Beds and left the room during the discussion of that item.**

**Mr A Christie and Mrs B McAllister each declared a non-financial interest, having an involvement in the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) which was connected with Highland Multicultural Friends, and, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, each concluded that their interest did not preclude their involvement with the discussion.**

**Mrs G Sinclair declared a non-financial interest as a Board member of the Highland Military Tattoo and, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, elected to remain in the room but did not take part in the discussion.**

**Mr A Graham and Mr T Prag each declared a non-financial interest as Directors of the Highlanders' Museum, which was connected to the Highland Military Tattoo, and, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, each concluded that his interest did not preclude his involvement with the discussion.**

**Mr A Graham declared a non-financial interest as a supporter of Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club, and member of the Social Club, and, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the**

**Councillors' Code of Conduct, left the room during discussion of that application.**

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/08/15 dated 21 April 2015 by the Inverness City and Area Manager which listed the applications received for financial assistance from the Inverness Common Good Fund. A copy of the applications and supporting documentation had been circulated as Booklets A, B and C.

**Booklet A**

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

Inverness High School (£7,880 sought) **APPROVE** £7,880  
S1 outdoor transition project – to subsidise the cost of 2.5 days at Nethybridge Adventure Centre for all S1 pupils, to support transition from primary to secondary school. Confirmation was given that the Ward discretionary funding sought by the School had been obtained.

Clachnacudden FC Youth Development U17 (£5,000 sought) **APPROVE** £5,000  
Participation in Dana Cup U17 football tournament in Denmark in July 2015.

Hilton Parish Church (£7,220 sought) **APPROVE** £7,220  
Salary costs for a Children and Families Worker to join the staff of Hilton Youth Project; to work towards reducing social isolation of young mothers and children, and to support vulnerable parents and those children who found the education process more demanding. Confirmation was given that the wider funding package was in place, and that the project was working closely with LEADER and others to provide a co-ordinated approach.

**Mr A Christie left the room for the duration of this item.  
Mr A Graham in the Chair**

Highland BlindCraft (£9,500 sought) **APPROVE** £9,500  
Expansion of the existing showroom to promote the long term future viability of Highland BlindCraft. In discussion, whilst supporting the activities of Highland BlindCraft, Members expressed concern regarding the viability of the company a couple of years hence, when other sources of funding would cease. Officers drew attention to the steps being taken to promote the company's viability, and gave an assurance that it would be a condition of any award that monies were not released until the full package of funding being sought by Highland BlindCraft was in place.

**Mr A Christie in the Chair.**

Starlight Musical Theatre Ltd. (£5,000 sought) **APPROVE** up to £5,000  
Children's musical production of Oliver at Eden Court in August 2015. In response to questions, Officers provided information on funding given to other

performance arts groups, and clarified that the application was to underwrite an amount up to £5,000, the actual sum being dependent on ticket sales.

Aulnaskiach Dell SCIO (£3,500 sought) **APPROVE** £3,500  
Aulnaskiach Dell – final phase of essential tree surgery.

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Therapy Centre (£9,500 sought) **APPROVE** £3,750  
The MS Therapy Centre – staffing and running costs. Officers informed Members that a rent waiver had been in place since 1991 but that this had now ceased; and that the building was on the Council's property portfolio with a current rent of £3,750pa. Members expressed support for the facilities provided by the Centre, which benefitted many people, but expressed concern at the apparent lack of financial security. In response to questions, clarification was given that the Sub Committee could award funding for assistance with running costs at its discretion; and Members were advised against introducing a peppercorn rent as, for accounting purposes and consistency, it was better to assess applications annually. Following discussion, the Sub Committee agreed to fund the rental element of the application only.

Ness Bank Church (£9,500 sought) **DEFER**  
Phase 3 heating project – replacement of 35 year old boiler and 114 year old cast iron pipework and radiators. Members were of the view that whilst the Church provided a useful and well run community centre for the city, there was a risk of setting a precedent of funding for church heating projects. Following discussion, Members requested that information as to whether the Church had applied for funding from other sources, such as available through carbon reduction schemes etc., be brought to a future meeting.

Inverness Tennis and Squash Club (£7,500 sought) **APPROVE** £5,000  
Squash Court Restoration – replacement of two remaining floors, plus works to walls in four courts, to bring up to national standard prior to a forthcoming international squash competition. Members commented that the Club's activities, particularly in relation to young people, were worthy of support, but that the Club had received funding on a number of previous occasions. The Sub Committee agreed to match the Club's level of funding for the project.

Inverness Street League (£3,500 sought) **APPROVE** £3,500  
Under 15 International football tournament in Manchester in July – assistance with costs of participants attending (accommodation/subsistence/fees/travel/insurance/events.)

Royal British Legion Scotland Inverness Branch (£10,000 sought) **APPROVE** £7,500 *subject to conditions*  
National Armed Forces Day 2015 – free use of the Northern Meeting Park including staffing for the event; other associated costs of the event including tentage, costs of bands attending, advertising, and refreshments for veterans and VIPs. Members were of the view that the event promoted the city, but, given the increased sum sought this year (previous applications had been for £3-4,000) that all other ways of funding the Day should be investigated. Following discussion, Members **AGREED** that:

- i. officers work with the applicant to see how best use could be made of the funding, including in relation to covering advertising costs perhaps from other budgets;
- ii. the applicant be asked to produce a report for the Sub Committee setting out what was required under the national funding criteria, and specifying what help they would need in order to meet these;
- iii. the Council's Armed Forces Champion work with the applicant to help them grow the event; and
- iv. in future the applicant be asked to submit their application early in the year.

Highland Multicultural Friends (£5,000 sought) **APPROVE** £5,000  
 Highland Multicultural Friends: Building Community Links – programme of activities, outreach programme; part-time Co-ordinator and admin post.

Merkinch Enterprise (£5,000 sought) **APPROVE** £5,000  
 Information technology training for the unemployed – staffing, property and other costs. Confirmation was given that all other support sought by Merkinch Enterprise was now in place.

Scottish Waterways Trust (£7,500 sought) **APPROVE** £7,500  
 Nature Walks for Wellbeing – salaries and materials for nature-based therapy programme for people experiencing mental health issues. Sessions to include art, storytelling, sensory games and mindfulness. Members were strongly supportive of this project.

Highland Military Tattoo (£9,900 sought) **APPROVE** £9,900  
 Start-up costs for the Highland Military Tattoo – plan creation; arena seating deposit; marketing; administration. Confirmation was given that appropriate steps had been taken to address previous event management issues.

**Mr A Graham left the room for the duration of this item**

Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC (£8,000 sought) **APPROVE** £8,000  
 Scottish Cup final ICTFC v Falkirk FC – to support attendance at the event, including assistance with travel and free tickets for children. Members specified that the input from the Common Good Fund be given full recognition in all publicity.

Academy Street Action Team (£6,000 sought) **APPROVE** £6,000  
 Creation of additional events to support the work being undertaken by the Business Community to generate additional footfall in the City Centre following the fire in Academy Street. Confirmation was given that the Business Improvement District (BID) was involved and would be proactive in taking forward this project and would contribute financially. Members also noted that the application was still under development – approval of the overall funding allowed for flexibility enabling good ideas to be taken forward quickly.

## **Booklet B**

The Sub Committee **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** the following to the City of Inverness Area Committee (at its meeting on 2 June 2015) as it related to an application for more than £10,000:-

The Highland Council (£40,000 sought)

**DEFER**

Inverness Car Club – establishing a car club in Inverness to enable residents, businesses, community groups, visitors etc., to access cars on a pay-as-you-go basis without the need to own a vehicle. In discussion, whilst Members accepted the City Committee decision to approve the project in principle (2 December 2014), the Sub Committee did not have enough information to assess the application which was for a large sum. Further information was required on: the comparative costs of leasing and purchasing vehicles; the feasibility of obtaining second-hand cars, rather than brand new cars (given the depreciation on new cars); and whether local car dealers would be willing to support the scheme in any way, through good will, to reduce costs. Members **AGREED** that this information be emailed to them for comment, so that their views could be submitted to the City of Inverness and Area Committee and to the Resources Committee, as appropriate and as time allowed.

## **Booklet C**

The Sub Committee **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** the following to the City of Inverness Area Committee (at its meeting on 2 June 2015) as it related to an application for more than £10,000:-

Unique Tourism BID Ltd (TBID) (£20,000)

Promotion of Inverness for Business Tourism at national and international trade shows through the establishment of a dedicated team.

The Sub Committee also **NOTED** that a report would be brought to a future CIAC meeting seeking to broaden the Subvention costs centre to “Tourist Development and Subvention” to allow a broader use to be made of the funds.

### **6. Request for Extension to Grant Period**

The Sub Committee **AGREED** the request from Music in Hospitals to extend the grant period of their award from six months to ten months.

### **7. Civic Hospitality Requests**

**Declaration of Interest –**

**Mr T Prag declared a non-financial interest as he was acquainted with the applicants, and, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, elected to remain in the room but did not take part in the discussion of that item.**

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/09/15 dated 21 April 2015 by the Inverness City and Area Manager which listed the applications received for Civic Hospitality from the Inverness Common Good Fund. In this connection, a copy of the applications and supporting documentation had also been circulated as Booklet D.

In discussion, Members considered ways in which Common Good Funding could best recognise the work of all volunteers. It was suggested that a set number of civic receptions be held each year, with groups/charities etc. nominating volunteers to attend. This would make it easier for Members to be consistent in determining applications, and would more widely publicise the Common Good Fund's work in supporting volunteers, so increasing the number of volunteers receiving recognition. Specific requests for particular occasions could still also be considered. The Sub Committee **AGREED** that a report be brought to a future meeting setting out options.

Thereafter, the Sub Committee determined applications for civic hospitality as follows:

Inverness Hospital Radio – 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Request for buffet and drinks reception (November 2015) **AGREED**

Highland Week of International Curling 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Request for civic buffet or civic reception (February/March 2016) **AGREED**

Northern Counties Cricket Club – 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Request for Civic Dinner, early August 2015 **AGREED**

## 9. Homologation of Civic Hospitality Requests

The Sub Committee **AGREED TO HOMOLOGATE** the decisions to award Civic Hospitality as follows:

- Celtic Media Festival for a Civic Reception on 22 April 2015 at a cost of £1,400.00
- Botswana Exchange Visitors for a Civic Buffet on 27 March 2015 at a cost of £624.25
- Visit of the Lord High Commissioner for a Civic Buffet on 20 May 2015 at a cost of £1,785.00
- School Exchange (La Baule) College visit (Augsburg) for a Buffet Lunch on 7 May 2015 at a cost of £1657.90.

## 10. Date of Next Meeting

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 17 August 2015.

The meeting ended at 10.15 am