

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
City of Inverness Area Committee

1 September 2016

Agenda Item	14c
Report No	CIA/44/16

City Events and Festivals – Review of 2016-17 Events and Festivals Programme and Proposals 2017-18

Report by Inverness City Area Manager

Summary

This report;

- i. updates Members on the 2016/17 Events and Festivals Programme; and
- ii. seeks approval of the proposed 2017/18 Events and Festivals Programme at a cost of £320,000.

1. 2016-17 Events and Festivals Programme Update

- 1.1 Members are asked to note that the 2016-17 programme is on course to meet the aims and objectives contained in the action plan previously agreed by the City of Inverness Area Committee; and that during the period under review (January – August 2016) existing partnerships were enhanced; and new partnerships developed on a local, national and international basis.
- 1.2 The 2016-17 programme is currently forecasted to be delivered within its revised budget of £320,000. (see 1.4 below)
- 1.3 The Events and Festivals Working Group has supported the design, organisation and delivery of a number of additional events with various partners during the period under review. These have included; TruckNess, the Inverness Shinty Sixes, a revised Armed Forces Day, a Veterans Parade, the Inverness Wheelbarrow Grand Prix, the Bunkers Festival staged in support of the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Open Golf Championship and the World Highland Games Heavy Championships in Halkirk.
- 1.4 In addition the Working Group also provided support to the organisers of a number of proposed community events that did not take place for a variety of reasons. These included the Inverness Harriers 10K Road Race scheduled for Inverness Gala Sunday for which £10K had been added to the previously agreed budget of £330,000. The annual budget was reduced to £320,000 when it was decided following consultation with various stakeholders, not to proceed with this event.

- 1.5 While some of the proposed events are currently in development for launch in 2017; Members should note that the Inverness Harriers 10K is unlikely to return in 2017 as the Club does not have the capacity to host it at the present time. However close links are being maintained with the Harriers in order to make best use of future opportunities.
- 1.6 Members are asked to note that in order to reduce the impact on the roads network when events are staged in Bught Park that this year's Halloween event has been moved from its usual Friday Saturday slot and will be staged on Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th October after Inverness Leisure Centre has closed for the evening.
- 1.7 As usual the key event in determining the successful delivery of the events and festivals programme within budget is the Inverness Highland Games and members are asked to note that this year's event was successfully delivered within its budget. It is estimated that this year's event attracted over 10,000 spectators to Bught Park; and members are asked to note that the Events and Festival Working Group achieved this despite charging the lowest admission prices on the Scottish Highland Games circuit (at £5 and £3 with under 5's free); and allowing free entry to the site on Saturday evening and all day Sunday.
- 1.8 The previously reported rationale as to why it was thought that a two day event was necessary was:
- a) to enable the Council maximise the use of the infrastructure needed to accommodate the Highland Games that was available at no additional cost if used for a second day;
 - b) to establish an event with the potential to successfully host an expanded Inverness Harriers 10K Road Race in future years;
 - c) to generate additional income by attracting additional spectators, traders, exhibitors and community groups;
- 1.9 This has now been reviewed by the Inverness Highland Games Committee and the Events and Festivals Working Group (EFWG); and following consultation with the participants and traders attending the 2 day show in 2016, it is proposed to stage the Inverness Highland Games at Bught Park on Saturday 15th July 2017 and stage the Inverness Gala at the smaller Northern Meeting Park on Sunday 16th July 2017. This will allow for consideration if other uses to be considered for the site at Bught Park on Sunday by other groups.
- 1.10 Following the cancellation of TruckNess 2016 (following the retirement of its previous organisers); the support provided by the Council enabled the event to be staged alongside the Inverness Highland Games; while a new organising committee was recruited and trained. TruckNess will be staged at Bogbain Farm Inverness in June 2017-19.
- 1.11 At the City of Inverness and Area Committee Meeting held on 3 December 2015 Members considered Report CIA/58/15 "Event Tourism – The Way Forward" and approved the approach recommended in the report for the future development of events in Inverness and area. Members are asked to note that

following discussions with HIE, VisitScotland, Inverness Loch Ness Tourism BID and Inverness BID; arrangements are being made for stakeholders to attend a joint workshop in Inverness.

2. 2017-18 Programme

- 2.1 The proposed Core Events and Festivals programme for 2017/18 is shown on **Appendix 1**.

3 2017-18 Budget

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Budget for 2017/18 will be £320,000 (**Appendix 2**), which is the same as the amended budget of 2016. The allocated budget for the EFWG, which includes the costs of the Inverness Events Manager, has not been increased since 2013/14. Since then, inflationary costs totalling 2.21% (£5,400) have been absorbed. The Programme has been successful in attracting thousands of visitors to the City, especially at Hogmanay. Events have also been staged in the traditional shoulder months' of May and September which have helped extend the Summer Tourist Season. The Programme has become pivotal to many of the Hotels and Guest Houses in the City. If the City is to maintain the current level of quality of production then the recommendation is to maintain the existing budget. Efforts are being made to test the market for a commercial sponsor and the Inverness City Area Manager and the Inverness Events Manager are working closely with the Councils Commercial Manager on making best use of opportunities. Revenue Monitoring Statements detailing current spend against the budget heads, are now circulated with the Common Good Fund Revenue Monitoring Report at each Committee.

4 Events and Festivals Working Group Action Plan

- 4.1 The 2017/18 Action Plan is shown on **Appendix 3**, which has been adjusted to show the current partnership working arrangements.

5 Stakeholder Feedback

- 5.1 Members are asked to note examples of the feedback that has been received from local stakeholders in support of the work undertaken by the Working Group (**Appendix 4**).

6 2017/18 Programme Approval

- 6.1 Members will recall that previously, approval for the Events and Festivals programme of event was given by the Committee at the start of the Council's financial year.
- 6.2 Last year's decision to give approval in September and enable the Council and our stakeholders, our partners and our community to promote our events programme earlier has been warmly welcomed.

6.3 As highlighted previously there are a number of businesses and organisations based in Scotland and overseas, who require the earliest possible notification of the dates of the major events, which are to be staged in our city earlier for marketing and promotion and planning purposes.

6.4 Members are asked to note that no expenditure will be incurred before the start of the financial year.

7. Governance

7.1 The governance of the Inverness Events and Festivals programme remains strong, with all the events in the programme being well received, delivered safely and staged within the allocated budget.

7.2 A new revenue reporting format has been agreed with Financial Services which will see quarterly reports distributed as attachments to the City of Inverness Area Committee Common Good Fund expenditure reports.

8. Equalities and Climate Change and Rural Implications

8.1 The delivery of projects under the governance arrangements identified in this report will be required to meet The Highland Council's Policies.

8.2 The Council will also ensure that the events supported by the IEFWG Programme meet all the relevant standards in terms of providing an environment which can be enjoyed by persons of any ability

8.3 Wherever possible, the Council takes the opportunity to recycle waste from its events and promote the use of public transport to get to and from events.

8.4 There are no known climate changes or rural implications as a result of this report.

9. Risks

9.1 There are no known risks other than the potential health and safety and reputational risks associated with managing large events, attracting many thousands of people. These risks are managed through the provisioning of professional management frameworks within the City Manager's Office, including the operation of the Multi-Agency Safety Advisory Group.

10. Recommendation:

Members are asked to:

- i.** Approve the proposed 2017/18 programme at a cost of £320,000 and the allocation of a budget in the sum of £320,000 from the Inverness Common Good Fund Budget for 2017/18 (**Appendix 2**)
- ii.** Approve the proposed 2017-18 Action Plan (**Appendix 3**)
- iii.** Note the Stakeholder Feedback (**Appendix 4**)

Designation: David Haas Inverness City Area Manager

Authors: Gerry Reynolds, Inverness Events Manager
David Haas, Inverness City Area Manager

Date: 5 August 2016

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 2017-18 Events and Festivals Programme

Appendix 2 2017-18 Events and Festivals Budget

Appendix 3 2017-18 Events and Festivals Action Plan

Appendix 4 Stakeholder Feedback

Appendix 1

Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group

Core Events Programme 2017-18

Date	Event	Location
15 July	Inverness Highland Games	Bught Park
16 July	Inverness Gala	Northern Meeting Park
28-29 Oct	Halloween	Ness Islands
4 Nov	Fireworks Display * Nov 5 is a Sunday	Bught Park
19 Nov	Christmas Lights	City Centre
19 Nov	Ding Dong Merrily Old High	Old High Church
15-17 Dec	Winter Wonderland	Whin Park
31 Dec	Red Hot Highland Fling	Northern Meeting Park

Appendix 2

Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group

Core Events Budget 2017-18

Code	Item	Budget
20 10 101	Staff	45000
20 10 102	Inverness Highland Games & Gala Weekend	47000
20 10 103	Fireworks Display	25000
20 10 104	Christmas Lights	10000
20 10 105	Red Hot Highland Fling	120000
20 10 106	Halloween	37000
20 10 107	Winter Wonderland	12000
20 10 112	Summer Marketing	12000
20 10 113	Winter Marketing	12000
	Total	320000

Appendix 3

Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group

Action Plan 2017-18

(Revised 26 July 2016)

1. Introduction

1.1 Goal

- To stage Events and Festivals that will benefit and engage with the people of Inverness and surrounding area.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

- To develop Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter Festivals which will connect and bring social, cultural and economic benefits to the City of Inverness.
- To use and focus upon the use of local talent to the social, cultural and economic benefit of our community
- To use and focus upon the opportunities offered by the imaginative use of the infrastructure and fabric of our community
- To develop the active involvement of a broad range of the City of Inverness and surrounding area's residents and organisations in our Events and Festivals
- To develop a learning culture around our Events and Festivals encouraging interconnectedness between community groups, by enabling co-operation, joint initiatives and the sharing of resources
- To stimulate a positive sense of Festival ownership, Festival design and Festival involvement amongst the younger members of our community
- To continue to develop Events and Festivals which will attract visitors to Inverness
- To work in partnership with independent promoters ensuring that, notwithstanding the fact that they are in a competitive market, the best use is made of the opportunities that are available.
- To ensure that the Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group (IEFWG) works closely with the Inverness Loch Ness Tourism BID, Inverness BID and the Inverness City Arts (ICArts) Group in order to ensure that the best possible use is made of the

opportunities that are available to heighten the profile of Inverness as a destination locally, nationally and internationally.

2. Common Good Fund Sponsored Events

- Enhance the core events of the Winter and Summer Festivals by continuing to allow them to grow organically, focusing on the cultural heritage of the City and the Highlands;
- Develop links with Businesses within the City through Inverness BID, Inverness Chamber of Commerce, Inverness Hotel Association and the Federation of Small Businesses;
- Grow the relationship with other economic / artistic partners such as Eden Court, ICArts and UHI; and
- Focus on nurturing sponsorship opportunities which will grow in line with the stature of individual events.

3. Commercial Events

- In conjunction with High Life Highland and others, develop opportunities to utilise Council controlled premises such as Northern Meeting Park (NMP), as a base for bringing events to the City;
- Continue to enhance relationships with promoters to ensure that opportunities are not lost to link their events with the Council's own events and festivals programme;
- Work with promoters to identify ways in which their events can be enhanced by linking them with either other commercial events or promotional activity (linked to Marketing Strategy) in Inverness
- Identify events which have potential to develop into national and international events.

4. Close Partnership Working

- Enhance links with other Local Authorities, National Bodies and appropriate groups to create cohesion and coordination within the Events programme and the Marketing Programme.
- Continue to develop the multi-agency approach to event design utilised by the IEFWG;
- Ensure that the communication between stakeholders and partners is clear with a consistent message being applied, using Forums when necessary;
- Develop a culture of cross working between local stakeholders and the IEFWG to ensure synergy between objectives; and

- Enhance the existing events calendar and work with the Council's Corporate Strategy on website design and promotion of major events in the Highlands

5. Evaluations

- Use Event Scotland's Event Impacts model (<http://www.eventimpacts.com/>) to establish a base line figure for the value of the events staged by the Council in Inverness and identify those events where the economic impact could be significantly increased. Work with external events organisers in determining the economic impact of their events and developing strategies and actions to increase their impact, wherever possible to the Councils events and festivals programme.

6. Sponsorship

- Working in partnership with the Highland Council's Commercial Manager, the focus when attracting investment to events facilitated by the Council through the Inverness Common Good Fund, should be on "adding value". Sponsors will be keen to show that by their investment, the event has been able to move to the next level.
- Ensure that a consistent message is developed through media engagement about the benefits that events bring to the City and
- Look at the aims and objectives and culture of companies within the Highlands and beyond, working with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Inverness BID, Destination Loch Ness Inverness Tourism BID and the Inverness Chamber of Commerce to identify opportunities.

7. Culture Links

- Enhance existing cultural links nationally and internationally and where appropriate and resources allow, develop new links.
- Continue to work with overseas contacts in USA, Canada and New Zealand (via Highland Games links), as well as European partners and contacts in order to foster a cultural exchange, which enhances the profile of the City and the Highlands all within the current resource allocations.

8. Twinned Towns

- Work with our existing Twinned Towns of La Baule, Augsburg and St Valery (through the Town Twinning Committee) to develop opportunities for our twinned Towns to take part in our festivals programme and where appropriate to link in with the commercial events.

9. Charities

- To work with Charities who bring principle benefit to the residents of the Burgh of Inverness.

- Invite applications from Charities to the Council for financial support via the Council's standard application form. Focusing on:

The benefits that the organisation can bring to the people of Inverness

The future programme of investment that the organisation is planning to make in respect of its activities within the City

What "added value" can it bring to the event which it seeks to seek benefit from and

What physical resources can be made available by the charity toward the running of the event such as the supply of publicity / media support or fully licensed stewards.

10. Charging for Certain Events

- It has been traditional to make a modest charge for entry to the Inverness Highland Games (currently £5 and £3).
- Noting the need to continue to develop the events portfolio, any policy in relation to charging for additional events requires the approval of the City of Inverness Area Committee.

11. Review

- This Action Plan will be subject to operational review by the IEFWG quarterly and the City of Inverness Area Committee annually.

Appendix 4

Stakeholder Feedback

“The event was a great opportunity for our young boxers to feel part of the Festival itself, rather than visitors, which is a very empowering feeling for all local community groups. They were very proud to not only showcase the skills of the Club, but also assist in increasing the range and diversity of events within the Festival. Many thanks for providing them with this opportunity, and we hope to do it all again next year! Please don’t hesitate to contact me at any time if you feel Inverness City Boxing Club could assist with any future events.”

Laurie Redfern (Head Coach: Inverness city Boxing Club)

“Providing visitors to Inverness and the Highlands with a range of events they can experience and enjoy is hugely important to the well-being of the local tourism sector. While the spectacular and beautiful Natural Environment of the Highlands along with the area’s rich history and heritage are the main reasons why visitors chose to holiday in the Highlands, their holiday experience is hugely enhanced through a programme of events which will often provide lasting memories that will be talked about and shared with friends and family when our visitors return home.”

Scott Armstrong (VisitScotland)

“A city's worth cannot just be measured by its industry and its economy. Culture and events are vital ingredients to a vibrant city. We are blessed to have people such as Gerry Reynolds who understand the importance of events in giving a city life.”

Bruce Macgregor (Bogbain Farm)

“Fantastic weekend of fun and events for all. We had the opportunity to trade at the event with our business The Larder and it was a huge success for us. Great atmosphere and a very well organised weekend indeed. Looking forward to all the future events and to next year's Gala Weekend.”

Stu Forrester (The Larder – Inverness)

“It was a great opportunity to have our “Nessie” mascot from Loch Ness by Jacobite involved in the Inverness Highland Games. It allowed us to present the fun side of our business and promote our cruises and tours to the visitors attending. The Highland Games themselves are a great reason to visit Inverness and to encourage visitors to extend their stay in the area”

Freda Newton, Managing Director, Jacobite Cruises Ltd.

“As General Manager of Kingsmills we very much appreciate all the effort and hard work that the city put’s into organising events in Inverness throughout the years. The first point to make is the quality of the events organised by the city over the last three years has improved so much, not only the quality of the events themselves however also the communication in advance of each of these events to allow us to full promote these on to our various guests and different markets. Many of the city events generate/ create demand, for local hotels and accommodation providers, the events we welcome with so much enthusiasm are the events hosted from October to April. This is still our shoulder season and increased events during these months really help us drive occupancy.”

Craig Ewan (General Manager Kingsmills Hotel/Kingsclub & Spa)

“All the members of the AHCS [Association of Highland Clans and Societies] thought that this year’s Clan Village was the busiest and most productive – and indeed enjoyable – yet. Many members reported more enquiries about their clans than in recent years, and at my table we had visitors from places such as Singapore and the Philippines, as well as the usual Americans, Canadians, Australians and New Zealanders. The most pleasing aspect however was the increased number of Scots stopping by, which gives us the chance to recruit one or two more helpers for our home societies – and this may well have been as a result of the additional features included in the games and gala this year. Our thanks once again to Highland Council for providing us with this facility, and to you for all the hard work that goes into setting up this very successful event.”

Graeme Mackenzie (Chairman Association of Highland Clans and Societies)

“It was an amazing experience, thank you so much for the opportunity for us to perform at your wonderful Highland Games.”

Jan-Laurens Dierickx and Elien Keirse (University of Leuven Choir Belgium)

“Dear Sir,

We just wanted to email and say how much we enjoyed the whole weekend at Inverness at the Highland Games. For several years we had wanted to come and how glad we were that we did. We travelled from Somerset for the games and having seen what a marvellous event it is we hope to come again next year. What a lot of time must of been spent in organising it all, thank you for all of the hard work that made it such a memorable event.

We look forward to next year already!”

Guy and Mary Taylor

“On behalf of the TruckNess family I would be grateful if you could pass on our thanks to your Events Manager Gerry Reynolds. I am not sure if you are aware of the background to our involvement at last weekend’s Inverness Highland Games and Gala Weekend; but following the retirement of our previous organisers, TruckNess 2016 had been cancelled and really did not appear to have a future. When myself and my son in law Matty posted that it would be a shame to see such a much loved event disappear on Facebook; Gerry contacted us and offered his support to help us organise it. Having not attempted anything on this scale before ourselves, I cannot thank you enough for the encouragement and support that we received from the Council via Gerry over the months leading up to this event. I hesitate to guess exactly how many hours Gerry spent working with us; both face to face and online; but he helped us to deliver last weekend’s show; and also bought us the time that we needed to form a team that will be able to stage TruckNess 2017. At the moment we are planning to stage TruckNess 2017 at Bogbain Farm, which was the site of the first TruckNess, and we have some exciting plans and high hopes for the years ahead. While Bught Park was not the ideal location for our type of event; our visit to the Inverness Highland Games and Gala in 2016 gave us an ideal opportunity to learn how the Council stages its events so effortlessly. Hard work and lots of it.

Many thanks”

George MacIennan (TruckNess 2017 Secretary)