

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in 1st Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Tuesday 26 July 2016 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Highland Council

Cllr F Parr (CFP)

Cllr G Ross (CGR)

Cllr H Wood (CHW)

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager (D)

Mr G Reynolds, Inverness Events Manager (GRR)

Other Representatives

Mr G Ambrose, CEO, Visit Inverness Loch Ness, (GA)

Ms J Cuddy, Manager, Eastgate Shopping Centre (JC)

Cllr F Parr in the Chair

The Chairman welcomed Mr G Ambrose who was joining the Working Group.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of

Mr C Marr, Chief Executive, Eden Court Theatre,

Mr M Smith, Manager, Inverness BID and

Ms A Windsor, Cluster General Manager, Columba Hotel, Inverness Hotels Association.

2. Resignation of Cllr G. Sinclair

The resignation of Cllr G. Sinclair from the Working Group was noted. The Working Group agreed that its appreciation and thanks for Cllr. Sinclair's contribution to its success since the Working Group was established be recorded in the minutes.

3. Exclusion of the Public

It was **AGREED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public should 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. Declarations of Interest

CHW advised of a non-financial in the Inverness Highland Games – family member involved with a stall at the event. CFP had a non-financial interest in venue bookings as a member of the Board of High Life Highland.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 19 April 2016 which were **NOTED**.

In relation to Item 1 – GR advised that no meeting had been held with G A

In relation to Item 5 – the following updates were discussed:

- It was noted that following a meeting with Cllr Caddick that a format for the Working Group's expenditure reporting had been agreed; and that the reports on Working Group expenditure would be produced on a quarterly basis from September. Action: GR to arrange for draft to be circulated to the Working Group Members for Information.
- Meetings had been held with representatives of Inverness Royal British Legion and it was noted that the Armed Forces Flag Raising Ceremony had taken place on June 20th; and a Veterans Parade had taken place at the Inverness Highland Games on July 16th.
- GR advised that for operational reasons the City Manager's Office had assumed responsibility for the delivery of the Gala Day
- The 10K was cancelled after consultation with various stakeholders. It was noted that an Inverness Harriers representative has been appointed to the Games Committee.
- GR advised that the proposed Inverness Jazz Festival, Haggis Hurling and Croy Carties Race events were all cancelled by their community organisers. After review it had been decided that a disclaimer had to be inserted into the Summer Supplement to ensure that none Council events were clearly identified.
- The Bunkers Festival had been well received in support of the Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Open Golf Championship; and the banners and floral displays had added colour to the city centre.
- A Café had been established at the Games and the additional tables, chairs and shelter available in the third marquee had been popular.
- The Clansman Centre owner had been approached but had been unable to organise a film show, demonstration or march due their current obligations.
- JC advised that she had met with the Highland Business Women's Group, and not ARCHIE, and asked that the minutes of the previous meeting be changed accordingly. It was noted that a Fashion and Makeover event had been booked in to the Gala Weekend programme but was subsequently cancelled to avoid clashing with the event organised by Inverness Women's Aid.

6. Event Managers Update on 2016 Events

The Working Group then discussed the 2016 Inverness Highland Games and Gala which has attracted an estimated crowd in excess of 10,000 to Bught Park. It was noted that admission was charged between 10.30 – 17.00 on Saturday; and that Saturday evening and Sunday was free. Ticket sales were recorded as 5197.

The weekend had included the addition of TruckNess to the programme following the resignation of its organisers earlier in the year; and it was noted that the intervention by the Council had enabled the event to be saved, a new TruckNess Committee to be established; and for its members to gain experience alongside the Council team. The support of the Council had been acknowledged in a letter of thanks and it was noted that it had been arranged for TruckNess to be staged at Bogbain Farm in June 2017, 2018 and 2019.

The Working Group then discussed the Veterans Parade which had attracted less participants than had been expected by Inverness RBL. It was agreed that CFP, DH and GR would meet with the Inverness RBL to discuss the arrangements for 2017.

The Working Group then considered a number of suggestions for changes that the Highland Games Committee were recommending should be made to the 2017 programme following a review of the Games and Gala weekend with participants, activity organisers and traders.

It had been suggested that the 2017 Games be held at Bught Park on Saturday 15th July; while the 2017 Gala be held at Northern Meeting Park on Sunday 16th July 2017. After discussing the implications of a transfer from the Bught to Northern Meeting Park overnight; and the opportunities for subletting the Games Day infrastructure and generating additional income; the Working Group agreed to support the recommendations. GR added that discussions regarding the introduction of a Pipe Band competition into the Games Day programme were underway. GR added that he had advised the Park Run organisers that their event would be re-established on its normal route in 2017.

CGR said that the Highland Games has generated a terrific atmosphere and the Highland Fling at the opening ceremony had been fantastic. The event had been well attended and it had been a brilliant and well organised day.

CHW asked if the site could be compacted as it was challenging for visitors with mobility issues. GR advised that this was already under consideration and DH suggested that Shopmobility be approached and asked to attend the 2017 event.

JC advised that she had received really good feedback and was aware of some traders who had sold out by mid-afternoon on Games Day.

CHW then asked about the governance of the Games Committee and Working Group representation on it. DH advised the Provost attended the Games Committee in her capacity as Chieftain and that he attended the Games

Committee with GR as officers. It was noted that the financial governance lay with the Working Group and the operational and delivery governance lay with the Games Committee. He added that the Games Committee always clarified that they had Working Group approval for any changes that they were considering making.

JC asked if the signage and security around the VIP seating area could be improved and the seats immediately behind it could be reserved for use by guest during the opening ceremony. GR agreed to arrange this

The Working Group then considered work undertaken following receipt of a request for financial support to assist with the proposed staging of a Commonwealth Heavyweight Championship Boxing match in October 2016 featuring Inverness based boxer Gary Cornish. It was noted that following consultation with a number of partners that no offers of funds had been received. DH said that he had one more meeting to discuss the proposal before officially replying; however it was anticipated that it would not be possible to secure the funding needed.

The Working Group then considered the arrangements for the 2016 Winter Festival and it was agreed that once the replacement for Cllr Sinclair was identified that the line-up for the Hogmanay 2016 show would be announced. The Working Group agreed that future line-up announcements would be made earlier in the year following receipt of a request from the business community to do so.

GR and DH then briefed the Working Group on work that was underway to look at emerging traffic management issues at Bught Park as a result of the work to complete the West Link Distributor Road. It was noted that the Halloween Show had been moved from its traditional Friday Saturday slot to Saturday and Sunday 29th and 30th October 2016 in order to avoid the congestion around Inverness Leisure Centre and Ice Rink experienced in 2015.

The Working Group then discussed the arrangements for the Christmas Lights Switch. It was agreed that JC, GA and Mike Smith would manage the Charity Torchlight Procession and seek nominations from Charities wishing to benefit from this opportunity. GR would manage the operation and control of the parade through the city centre.

JC asked if the BID Street Theatre Festival would be the opening event in the Winter Festival and it was agreed that it would be. The Working Group then discussed links with the conferences that were scheduled to take place in the city; and the support that would be given to the upcoming Knit Fest event.

- GR then updated the Review of Games and Gala with recommendations
- Cornish Fight
- City Committee Report in September
- Updated Action Plan

7. 2016-17 Budget Forecast

It was noted that the Budget was forecast to be within budget following the Highland Games

8. City Committee Paper and Feedback from Stakeholders

GR circulated a draft copy of the City and Area Committee Paper which was to be presented at the meeting on September 1st. It was agreed that comments would be submitted to GR by 10th August; and noted that GR would be contacting stakeholders for comments regarding the programme for inclusion in the report.

DH said that it was clear from looking at the Action Plan how closely the events that were being organised were meeting the aims and objectives of the programme. He added that meetings were to be held with HIE and UHI shortly to discuss future arrangements with them.

9. Any Other Business

None

10. Date of Next Meeting

It was NOTED that the date of the next meeting would be confirmed in due course.

The meeting ended at 11.30am