

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, Inverness on Thursday, 23 February 2017 at 10.30am.

Present:

Mrs H Carmichael	Mr J Gray
Mr R Balfour	Mr D Kerr
Mrs C Caddick	Mr R Laird
Miss J Campbell	Mr K MacLeod
Mr A Christie	Mr F Parr
Mr J Crawford	Mr T Prag
Mrs M Davidson	Mrs T Robertson
Dr J Davis	Mr G Ross
Mr N Donald	Mrs J Slater
Mr A Duffy	Ms K Stephen
Mr K Gowans	Mr H Wood
Mr A Graham	

Also Present:

Mr D Millar

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr M MacLeod, Head of Planning and Building Standards, Development and Infrastructure Service
Mr B Porter, Head of Resources, Care and Learning Service
Mr R Campbell, Estate Strategy Manager, Care and Learning Service
Mr D Goldie, Head of Housing
Mr C Baxter, Planner, Development and Infrastructure Service
Brian, traffic
Mr A Bryce, Road Safety and Safer Routes to School Officer, Development and Infrastructure Service
Ms D Sutton, Amenities Manager (South), Community Services
Mr S Manning, Principal Traffic Officer, Community Services
Ms F Shearer, Education Quality Improvement Manager (South Area), Care and Learning Service
Ms K Ralston, Area Care and Learning Manager, Care and Learning Service
Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager, Corporate Development Service
Miss J Green, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

Also in attendance:

T/Chief Inspector Ian Graham, Inverness Area Commander, Police Scotland
Mr J McDonald, Community Safety Manager, Inverness BID
Mr I Murray, Chief Executive, High Life Highland
Mr G Watson, Head of Resources, High Life Highland

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to Committee.

Mrs H Carmichael in the Chair

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, the Provost & City Leader confirmed that this would be the last meeting of the Committee in the current term of the Council and thanked all staff, and especially the Civic Team within the Town House, for the work undertaken to support the Committee.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr I Brown, Mrs B McAllister and Mrs G Sinclair.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

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

- Item 4 – Mr R Laird and Mrs J Slater (non-financial)
- Item 5 – Mrs J Slater (non-financial)
- Item 6 – Mr K Gowans (non-financial) Mr K Gowans (financial)
- Item 7 – Mr K Gowans (non-financial) Mr K Gowans (financial)
- Item 9 – Mr A Graham (financial)
- Item 11 – Mr K Gowans (non-financial) Mr K Gowans (financial)
- Item 12 – Mr A Christie (non-financial)
- Item 14 – Mr K Gowans (financial)

New Year's Honours Urraman na Bliadh' Ùire

The Committee **NOTED** that the following individuals had been recognised in the New Year's Honours List:-

- Mrs Freda May Newton MBE
- Mr David James Ross MBE
- Mrs Karen Dark MBE
- Ms Margaret McBain OBE
- Mrs Jane Martin Munro OBE
- Mrs Elsie Normington OBE
- Mrs Mary Helen Ross OBE

3. Police – Area Performance Summary Poileas – Geàrr-chunntas air Coileanadh Sgìreil

There had been circulated Joint Report No CIA/01/17 dated 9 February 2017 by the Inverness Area Commander which provided a local summary update on progress with the local priorities within the Highland 2014-2017 Policing Plan.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- whilst acknowledging that there had been an increase in anti-social behaviour which had caused distress to local residents in the Dalneigh area, it was unfair to suggest that this had been solely connected to the Dalneigh Youth Club as it was understood that there had been groups of youths from across the City converging in the Dalneigh area. In this regard, appreciation was expressed to the Police for their support and further assurance sought that resources, as had been provided to tackle similar issues experienced at Inshes, would be deployed to address this situation. It was however stressed that there was a need to implement measures to permanently address the anti-social behaviour and not just move the problem from one area of the City to another. A holistic approach was required for the whole City to ensure that interventions were adopted which would engage young people and infrastructure, particularly in regard to community and sports facilities, needed to keep pace with developments to ensure that future needs were being met;
- there was concern that hate crimes were not being reported for varying reasons, such as fear of reprisals and also the perception that no action could or would be taken. As such, confidence and support needed to be provided to encourage reporting of these incidents in future;
- assurance was sought and received that diversionary activities were being taken forward to address problems with anti-social behaviour in the City centre area which it was suggested might be partly due to schools closing early on Fridays;
- overall, the figures within the report were very encouraging and this was welcomed, along with confirmation that recruitment was progressing well;
- there was still concern in relation to the increasing levels of cyclists on pavements, cars being parked at junctions, vehicles turning left onto the Ness Bridge from Huntly Street and illegal U-turns being made by cars on Academy Street and it was hoped that these issues could be followed up;
- the banks of the Canal had always been a meeting place for various groupings from across the City and a request was made for additional resources to be allocated to support the local Community Beat Officer in this regard;
- there was concern at the increasing demand for Police Officers to deal with mental health and medical issues and it was suggested that this needed to be addressed, particularly through joint working arrangements with NHS Highland wherever possible;
- abandoned vehicles often became the focus of vandalism and the targeted campaigns in this respect were welcomed;
- information was requested and provided on the work undertaken to identify stolen goods and return them to their owners. It was also suggested that further information should be provided on the supply of Class A drugs and mental health calls by incident;
- Police Officers had been noticed carrying side arms in the City centre and it was reiterated by one Member that this was felt to be excessive and that this view should be conveyed to the Chief Constable;
- the reduction in speeding offences was welcomed; and
- it was suggested that arrangements should be put in place to allow feedback on the survey 'Your View Counts' to be submitted by hard copy as well as online.

Thereafter, the Committee otherwise **NOTED** the progress report and the updates in relation to the five priorities - Road Safety, Drug/Alcohol Misuse, Antisocial Behaviour, Dishonesty and Public Protection as detailed.

4. Inverness Community Safety Partnership Com-pàirteachas Sàbhailteachd Coimhearsnachd Inbhir Nis

Declarations of Interest – Mr R Laird, as a member of Inverness Foodstuffs, and Mrs J Slater, as a representative of the Inverness Community Safety Partnership, declared non-financial interests in this item but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion.

There had been circulated Joint Report No CIA/02/17 dated 6 February 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager and Inverness Area Commander (Highland and Islands Division, Police Scotland) which summarised the activities of the Inverness Community Safety Partnership (ICSP) since the last report in June 2016.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- appreciation was expressed for the work and support provided in regard to the bridges in Inverness which had enabled work to progress with the Samaritans in regard to signage;
- the work of Inverness Foodstuffs Outreach Programme was welcomed and this had once again demonstrated the need for a day centre, similar to that previously provided by the Waterloo Homeless Day Centre, enabling critical services and support to be provided via a multi-agency approach;
- an update was sought and received on the rollout of the Naloxone intranasal programme;
- concern was expressed at the level of duplication within the voluntary sector and it was emphasised that there was a need for more co-ordinated partnership working to ensure effective and efficient deployment of resources;
- it was emphasised that the purpose of Inverness Foodstuffs was to supplement the core services provided by Highland Council and NHS Highland and it was important that these organisations recognised this when dealing with and supporting the volunteers. It was also clarified that Inverness Foodstuffs operated at Ness Bank but that it was an independent organisation with its own Board of Trustees and in this respect appreciation was expressed for the work and support provided by Mr Ivor Forsyth in particular; and
- further information was sought and provided on the help and support available for online abuse and bullying.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the work of the ICSP for 2016;
- ii. **AGREED** to endorse the work of the Operation Respect Daytime Group; and

- iii. **AGREED** to endorse progress being made on linking to work of the Third Sector and Social Enterprises across the City in support of finding positive pathways for people in need, specifically setting out preliminary planning around an initiative for a third sector co-ordination and action hub that sought to best co-ordinate third sector interventions with vulnerable people, some of whom featured in the work of statutory agencies, including Highland Council services, the Police, NHS Highland and Criminal Justice services.

**5. Inverness Community Safety Partnership – Operation Respect City Centre 2016/17 Winter Festival Period Evaluation Report
Com-pàirteachas Sàbhailteachd Coimhearsnachd Inbhir Nis – Aithisg Mheasaidh 2015/16 airson ‘Operation Respect’ Meadhan a’ Bhaile**

Declaration of Interest – Mrs J Slater declared a non-financial interest in this item as a representative 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.

There had been circulated Joint Report No CIA/03/17 dated 9 February 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager and Inverness Area Commander (Highland and Islands Division, Police Scotland) which provided Members with an overview of resources, actions, and an evaluation of the multi-agency Operation Respect – City Centre for the Winter Festival 2016/17.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- there was a need to commend the author for the clarity of the detail which had been provided within the report, including the comprehensive analysis of the five year trends to help with future long term planning and determination of how to best invest resources;
- this report confirmed the effectiveness of the multi-agency approach and highlighted the need for increased joint working to address key issues, many of which were non-criminal;
- a further analysis/breakdown of the report at Ward level would be helpful;
- consideration should be given to the provision of Taxi Marshals on a regular basis rather than just at set periods in the year;
- further information was sought and received on ‘hotspot’ streets and the factors which were causing incidents to reduce;
- there was concern at the reduction in checks on licensed premises; and
- further research should be undertaken with shoplifting offenders to understand the root cause (e.g. alcohol/drug addictions or Universal Credit issues) as this would enable appropriate help and support to be provided to reduce/eliminate repeat offending. In addition, shoplifters were currently targeting charity shops and a request was made for support from the Police to address this issue.

Thereafter, the Committee otherwise **NOTED** the evaluation available to date on the effectiveness of Operation Respect- City Centre for Winter 2016/17 as detailed.

In terms of Standing Order 17.2, the Chair had agreed that the following report should be circulated as an Urgent Additional Item of Business. In this regard, it was AGREED that it should be discussed at this point in the meeting.

15. School Investment Priorities in Inverness

There had been circulated Report No CIA/14/17 dated 17 February 2017 and Supplementary Report No CIA/14a/17 dated 21 February 2017 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update on the review of the pressures facing Inverness Schools and the outcome of the recent review of the Capital Programme. It also outlined the key capital investment priorities in the coming years which had emerged for consideration.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- tenders had been received and were currently being evaluated for Cauldeen Primary School and this was welcomed. There was also a need for further information in regard to Ness Castle and monitoring of the situation in relation to house building in the area;
- this was a very good report and whilst the development of nursery facilities at Milton of Leys was welcomed, it was considered that there were still other opportunities within the School which could be explored, including the introduction of a fourth classroom which would allow extra capacity;
- considerable development was being undertaken in the Inverness South area which had the potential to seriously impact on educational services and as such it was imperative that the Planning and Care & Learning Services worked together alongside other agencies in this regard;
- the Council currently had a Capital Programme for the next ten years and it was extremely important that these proposals were identified as high priority for inclusion within that Programme;
- the Briefing for Members which had been undertaken had been very useful and it was pleasing that the statistics and predictions were now much more accurate than had previously been the case;
- many schools were now being capped in terms of school placements and this was a concern;
- the schools within the City area were now at crisis point and this had to be acknowledged;
- all Members of the Committee had to be united in calling for this issue to be of the highest priority within the Capital Programme;
- consideration should be given to the potential options/benefits which could be offered by the provision of a Sixth Form College;
- the building of school campuses should also be considered as a possible future option, as well as the sharing of educational provision between schools;
- the planning process for the future had to be instigated now and a formal request for additional funding from the Scottish Government should also be considered;
- it had to be recognised that there was an urgent and ongoing need for more teachers in the area; and

- a clear and cohesive policy was needed in regard to the issues which had been identified and this required to be taken forward to the full Council for consideration.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the report, in particular the priorities listed in Section 4 and the update on the outcome of the Briefing Session with Members which had been held on Monday 20 February 2017.

- * It was also **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the Council that investment in School capacity and condition should be prioritised during its review of the Capital Programme.

6. Inverness Castle Viewpoint and Environmental Improvement Works Update **Fios às Ùr mu Àite-seallaidh agus Obraichean Leasachaidh Àrainneachd Caisteal Inbhir Nis**

Declaration of Interest – Mr K Gowans declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of High Life Highland 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.

Mr K Gowans also declared a financial interest in this item on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland 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.

There had been circulated Report No CIA/04/17 dated 24 January 2017 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure which provided an update on the progress of the current works to the North Tower and the grounds of Inverness Castle and highlighted that this was the first phase of turning the Castle into a major visitor attraction.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the Castle needed a different purpose and this was the first step towards achieving that aim;
- once the Castle was opened, it would set the tone for the future development of Inverness City Centre;
- the Castle Viewpoint would be extremely popular during the peak tourist season and a ‘must do’ visitor attraction and therefore needed to be some thought given to management of visitor numbers;
- the opportunity for local people to have a ‘first look’ at the North Tower on a non-paying basis was welcomed;
- the work undertaken previously by the Castle Delivery Group was commended;
- in relation to marketing, the use of social media in addition to traditional methods was welcomed. In this regard, it was suggested that a webcam would be popular worldwide especially during special events such as firework displays and therefore an ideal self-generating marketing idea.

Furthermore, the North Tower had originally been built to serve as a Prison;

- consideration should be given to the Museum and Art Gallery also charging an admission fee;
- free entry on one day per week for residents of Inverness should also be considered as an option;
- it would be important not to over-develop and congest this site; and
- consideration could perhaps also be given to management by a professional tourist operator which could generate regular income for the Council.

Thereafter, the Committee otherwise **NOTED** the progress of the current works to the North Tower and grounds of Inverness Castle and that future reports on progress with the wider Castle project would be brought to future meetings.

It was also **AGREED** that the Inverness City Area Manager would investigate the suggestions raised during discussion.

(At this point, the meeting adjourned for lunch and resumed at 2.15pm).

7. Inverness East Development Brief – Update Brath-leasachaidh Inbhir Nis an Ear

Declaration of Interest – Mr K Gowans declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of High Life Highland 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.

Mr K Gowans also declared a financial interest in this item on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland and as an employee of Inverness College/UHI 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.

There had been circulated Report No CIA/05/17 dated 6 February 2017 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure which updated the Committee on work to date regarding the preparation of an Inverness East Development Brief. In this regard, Members were invited to consider the outcome of consultation undertaken so far and agree the suggested strategy to address issues raised through the preparation of the Draft Development Brief.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- there was a need for clarification on where the East Link would connect with the A9 and A96 and confirmation that the coastal area would be protected;
- consideration should be given to the location of houses in Stratton in order to ensure that they were not built too close to the tree line;
- a new Primary School at Stratton had been included on the list of future investment priorities and this was welcomed. It was also suggested that the opportunity should be taken to consider the possibility of a 3-18 Campus;

- it was necessary to identify at the earliest opportunity a new site for a Waste Water Treatment Plant as expansion could not be supported at Ardersier;
- there was a need to ensure improvement of the current bus services in the east of the City;
- thanks should be conveyed to the Development Plans Team for hosting a Stakeholder Workshop which was engaging and extremely valuable and would help mitigate any objections to the Development Brief;
- although it was felt that the 'Hub' was a good idea, there was concern regarding how it would be implemented as it had to be effective and enhance facilities;
- it was suggested that an ideal location for providing key facilities and resources could be at the point where the new primary street met Barn Church Road on the basis that there was an adequate public transport service;
- in relation to the proposal for a District Park, it was important that there were many meaningful green spaces and paths to create a semi-rural feel and to ensure that people were well connected to green space;
- in terms of 'place making', there was a need for increased liaison with developers in order to influence the future style and character of houses;
- public art should be designed to fit the character of the area;
- the additional running lane on the A9 on the southbound approach to the Inshes Slip Road would improve safety and was welcomed. In this regard, it was requested that Members should be involved in any opportunity for political influence to alleviate the network capacity issues in this area;
- information was sought on the traffic modelling undertaken in relation to the Inshes Roundabout, in particular the exit for the Southern Distributor Road, due to the impact of an additional lane on the A9;
- in line with planning policy to retain the individuality of each community, green space could be used to create a green belt to separate the older houses in Culloden from the newer development;
- concern was expressed in relation to the potential impact of noise and exhaust pollution on houses built too close to the road;
- it would be important to clarify developer contributions at the beginning of the project;
- nursery and library provision should be included and in this regard it was suggested that the library could be placed in the middle of the District Park;
- clarification of the East Link route was required from Transport Scotland as a priority so that realistic solutions and traffic modelling could begin to be considered in relation to other routes including the Inshes Roundabout, West Link and Raigmore Interchange;
- confirmation was sought and received that the size of the proposed District Park would be the same as for Inshes Park and would be based on the number of houses;
- there was a need for consideration to be given to the current lack of sports facilities in the east side of the City;
- reference in the report to a 'town centre' at Stratton was not appropriate and should be amended to a more appropriate term;
- a solution should be sought to address the current problems with the volume of traffic at the Longman Roundabout travelling towards the A96 during peak times;

- consideration should be undertaken to minimising traffic on the East Link to ensure that it did not become a 'short cut' to Aberdeen;
- in relation to ensuring adequate open space throughout the site, concern was expressed in relation to the maintenance and cost of grass cutting;
- in addition to the requirement for affordable housing, it was essential that there was sufficient rented accommodation available;
- a rail halt could be put in place near the UHI to serve the East of the City and to reduce the number of vehicles in the City Centre;
- a plea was made that schools could be accessed via cycle routes and that a review be undertaken of the cycle routes to the UHI Campus via the Raigmore Estate; and
- confirmation was sought and received of the proposed location for the new Primary School.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the results of consultation to date as explained in Sections 2 and 3 of the report;
- ii. **AGREED** the scope of developer contributions proposed in Section 4 of the report;
- iii. **AGREED** the guiding principles for the Brief set out below and described in detail in Section 5 of the report:
 - Principle A: Identify a central location for community, commercial and leisure facilities as illustrated in Appendix 5;
 - Principle B: Identify a central district park that connects with the wider green network as illustrated in Appendix 5;
 - Principle C: Support the delivery of sports facilities in the east of the city as illustrated in Appendix 5;
 - Principle D: Ensure a high level of pedestrian, cycle and road connectivity in the area as illustrated in Appendix 4;
 - Principle E: Set out a strategy for design, travel and layout that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport usage and promotes diverse neighbourhoods as illustrated in Appendices 4 and 5; and
 - Principle F: Ensure a framework to deliver a viable high-quality city expansion;
- iv. **NOTED** the intention for a draft Brief to be brought to the Committee in June or September 2017 for approval;
- v. **AGREED** to support the additional 'running' lane on the southbound A9 as an early priority within the context of the East Link project; and
- vi. **AGREED** that the Council should progress the design and contract for the construction of an additional westbound lane across the B9006 Culloden A9 overbridge as an early priority.

8. **Ness Islands Management Works** **Aithisg Bhliadhnaile Eileanan Nis**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/06/17 dated 16 January 2017 by the Director of Community Services which detailed the allocation of work required on the Ness Islands in accordance with the current Ness Islands Management Plan and a report by Crudens Consulting Engineers dated April 2015.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- consideration should be given to improving the lighting on Ness Islands which was not considered to be sufficient;
- the annual maintenance budget had been provided for the maintenance of trees and shrubs and not refurbishment of artwork and benches;
- concern was expressed that people had stopped visiting Ness Islands due to the poor maintenance;
- in light of events being held on Ness Islands which could exacerbate the deterioration of the area, consideration should be given to a contribution for maintenance coming from the Events Budget;
- the planned bank erosion work was welcomed and should be given priority to ensure that there was no further loss of trees;
- it was important to look after mature trees and concern was expressed that when trees had been lost there had been a lack of replanting or the wrong species had been planted;
- in terms of safety, there should be a weight limit or a limit to the number of people on the Infirmary Bridge. In this regard, it was suggested that an Event Marshal should be in attendance during events being held at Bought Park;
- Ness Islands were an outstanding asset for the City and were visited by people from all over the world;
- it was suggested that a conversation be held with Community Payback regarding opportunities to compliment and contribute to the ongoing maintenance;
- it was thought that Ness Islands had the tallest Douglas Fir tree in Scotland and with this in mind it was requested that the different species of trees be identified to create a "Tree Trail" leaflet and map; and
- appreciation was expressed to the former Ward Manager, Mr Stewart Wardlaw, for the extensive work which he had undertaken during his time of employment in relation to Ness Islands.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** that the improvement plan was in progress and that a further report would be available once works were underway and there was more progress to report.

It was also **AGREED** that the different species of trees on Ness Islands should be identified to create a "Tree Trail".

9. Minor Amendments to Traffic Regulation Orders **Mion-atharrachaidhean do Òrdughan Riaghailtean Trafaig**

Declaration of Interest – Mr A Graham declared a financial interest in this item on the basis of owning a property on one of the streets listed in Section 2.2 of the report and confirmed that he would leave the room if this issue arose during discussion.

There had been circulated Report No CIA/07/17 dated 24 January 2017 by the Director of Community Services which invited Members to consider minor amendments to the Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) Traffic Regulation Order for Inverness and the review of Disabled Bay time limits. The report also provided an update on permit scheme issues.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the proposed amendments to enforcement activity would have some improvement on parking provision and was welcomed;
- a plea was made to consider a review of parking enforcement on Sundays in Inverness, which was the only City in Scotland to have all day enforcement of parking restrictions and was the only day many people had available to enjoy leisure, social and family activities in the City. Relaxing the current restrictions on a Sunday would benefit locals as well as visitors and businesses and promote the vibrancy and identity of the unique City;
- the limit to three hours maximum stay for Disabled bays was not sufficient for Blue Badge holders who worked in the City Centre;
- consideration should be undertaken in relation to the method of recording parking permits which was currently on the basis of car registration numbers which was not convenient for people who regularly changed their car;
- it was requested that the loading bay on Bridge Street was retained and not amended to a dual use bay because it was used regularly by nearby premises for brewery lorries and musicians;
- concern was expressed that the proposed location for the new Eastgate taxi rank had the highest impact on Carbon emissions in the City Centre and a commitment had been made to reduce Carbon emissions in this area whereas relocating the taxi rank would increase carbon emissions;
- confirmation was sought, and received, that the proposal to move the taxi ranks was permanent but subject to review;
- it was anticipated that permanently moving the taxi rank from Castle Wynd instead of only during the day for access to the Castle would create a bigger problem;
- confirmation was sought, and received, that national law allowed Blue Badge Holders unrestricted on street parking however restrictions could be applied to Disabled bays;
- a review of the parking permit scheme was welcomed and it was suggested that zonal permits was the way forward;
- there was an expectation from parking permit holders that there should be sufficient parking bays;
- a number of complaints had been received from residents in the area around Ness Bank Church in relation to parking on Sundays before Decriminalised Parking Enforcement was introduced and relaxing the parking restrictions on Sundays could create other problems;
- moving the Taxi rank to Bridge Street was welcomed and it was recognised that it was difficult to please all taxi operators;
- there was concern expressed regarding the impact on the Mosque of reducing the amount of permit parking on Portland Place;
- introducing a complete 6 day permit parking scheme would alleviate the confusion regarding the restrictions in place and the amount of different signage required however it would not be popular with residents who did not have access to off-street parking;
- there was a lack of sufficient records in relation to parking permits including how many permits had been issued for each street and how many permit bays existed;

- it would be difficult to issue a sufficient amount of parking permits for each Church in Inverness on Sunday and therefore offering free parking on Sundays would be more appropriate;
- it was queried whether there would be a discount for requesting a parking permit for 6 days instead of 7 days;
- in relation to the Residents Permit Parking Survey, question one should be amended to reflect that a household could have both a Residents and Visitor parking permit;
- it was important to remember when pedestrianising the area that Castle Wynd was an access road to the former Pound Stretcher and Crofters Commission car park;
- there was a need for a Taxi rank that was appropriately placed to feed the West side of the river;
- there were issues with people applying for parking permits online and it was requested that this was not the only method of applying;
- concern was expressed in relation to the unusual habits of Taxi drivers on Academy Street and details were sought of the measures in place to prevent Taxi drivers from doing the same on Bridge Street;
- a public consultation would allow for views to be sought on amendments to the parking restrictions which had been suggested before a decision was made;
- there was a need to consult residents from Ballifeary Road who had requested a permit parking scheme;
- there was a desire to introduce 15 minutes free parking within Inverness City Centre as defined by the Inverness BID geographical boundaries to allow people to quickly visit nearby businesses;
- further information was sought on introducing 15 minutes free parking including the effect on traffic flow, how it would be enforced and the benefits;
- it would have been preferred if there was prior discussion at the Central Ward Business Meeting on the proposal to introduce 15 minutes free parking; and
- it was requested that the Principal Traffic Officer investigate and provide a report on the feasibility of reducing the decriminalised parking enforcement operating hours on Sundays and introducing 15 minutes free parking to the next meeting.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** the changes listed in Item 2.2 of the report and the amendment of the existing Traffic Regulation Order, subject to standard Traffic Regulation Order Procedures;
- ii. **AGREED**, as per Item 3, the investigation and implementation of time limited Disabled Bays in Inverness City Centre, subject to agreement with stakeholders and representatives. The changes would also be subject to standard Traffic Regulation Order Procedures;
- iii. **NOTED** Item 4 of the report;
- iv. **AGREED** the changes in Item 5 by amendment of the existing Traffic Regulation Order, subject to standard Traffic Regulation Order Procedures; and
- v. **AGREED** that the Principal Traffic Officer investigate and provide a report on the feasibility of reducing the decriminalised parking enforcement operating hours on Sundays and introducing 15 minutes free parking

within Inverness City Centre as defined by the Inverness BID geographical boundaries.

10. Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets Update Fios às Ùr mu Rothaireachd, Coiseachd agus Sràidean nas Sàbhailte

There had been circulated Report No CIA/08/17 dated 20 December 2017 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure which invited Members to approve the projects delivered through the Scottish Government funding for Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets for the City of Inverness Area Committee, as set out in Appendix 1.

In this regard, it was confirmed that Appendix 1 within the report detailed the applications for approval in connection with Farr Primary School, Duncan Forbes Primary School and Kirkhill Primary School.

The Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the Cycling Walking and Safer Streets/Safer Routes to School (CWSS/SRTS) Project as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- ii. **NOTED** that the Road Safety Unit would continue to work with schools to develop further SRTS Projects for future years.

11. Millburn Academy Associated School Group Overview Sealladh Coitcheann air Buidheann Sgoiltean Co-cheangailte Acadamaidh Allt a' Mhuilinn

Declarations of Interest – Mr K Gowans declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of High Life Highland 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.

Mr K Gowans also declared a financial interest in this item on the basis that his wife was an employee of High Life Highland 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.

There had been circulated Report No CIA/09/17 dated 13 February 2017 by the Director of Care and Learning which provided an update of key information in relation to the schools within the Millburn Academy Associated School Group (ASG) and useful updated links to further information in relation to these schools.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- whilst welcoming the detail which had been presented within the report, it would be helpful if in future the statistics could be broken down to a Ward level (and perhaps presented at Ward meetings) to allow additional scrutiny;

- a focus on specific issues, such as looked after children, capping/uncapping of school numbers, literacy, numeracy and early years learning would also be helpful;
- consideration should also be given as to whether there needed to be changes to the format of the report in future with updates being presented through to Wards with an interest in the relevant Associated School Group; and
- further information on the number of teachers, including supply teachers, would also be helpful for future reports.

Thereafter, the Committee otherwise **NOTED** the content of the report.

12. Housing Performance Report – 1 April to 31 December 2016 Aithisg Dèanadais Taigheadais – 1 Giblean gu 31 Dùbhlachd 2016

Declaration of Interest – Mr A Christie declared a non-financial interest in this item as General Manager of Inverness, Badenoch and 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 his involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No CIA/10/17 dated 30 January 2017 by the Director of Community Services which provided information on how the Housing Section had performed in relation to the Scottish Social Housing Charter and other performance indicators up to 31 December 2016.

In this regard, it was confirmed at the meeting that the statistics within the report in regard to Table 4 – Current Rent Arrears – Number of Houses – was incorrect and would be revised for future reports.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- it would be helpful if future reports could provide a breakdown of the works which had been undertaken at all properties within specific areas;
- in terms of the increasing workload, there was a need for a review of the support being provided to the Homelessness team; and
- further information should be provided in future reports in relation to rent arrears, specifically arrears in relation to service charges, temporary accommodation and as a result of Welfare Reform legislation.

Thereafter, the Committee otherwise **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016 as detailed.

13. Inverness Common Good Fund Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis

(a) Financial Monitoring Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail

There had been circulated Report No CIA/11/17 dated 10 February 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager which presented the expenditure

monitoring position for the Inverness Common Good Fund as at 31 January 2017 and the projected year end position.

The Committee **NOTED** the financial monitoring report as presented.

**(b) Budget Setting for 2017/18 and Capital Programme
Suidheachadh Buidseat airson 2017/18 agus Prògram Calpa**

There had been circulated Joint Report No CIA/12/17 dated 9 February 2017 by the Director of Finance and the Inverness City Manager which invited Members to set the revenue budget for the Inverness Common Good Fund (ICGF) for the financial year 2017/18.

In this regard, the report clarified governance arrangements, anticipated income (primarily from tenancy rentals), the proposed expenditure, split into essentials (for the maintenance of buildings and the provision of basic services) and a number of additional items, action on the future investment of any projected surplus funds and the structure of payments made to the Council for services rendered in support of the fund and how these services should be supported in the coming financial year and thereafter.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** the Common Good Fund budget for 2017/18 as detailed within the report and appendices;
- ii. **AGREED** to maintain a general reserve of £2m and reallocate the remaining uncommitted sum of £1.6m to a Property Investment Fund; and
- iii. **NOTED** that Officers would continue to monitor projected cash flow for the Common Good Fund, in particular through the Capital Projects Monitoring Report, with an emphasis on the utilisation of surplus revenue either within projects or as an opportunity for investment.

**(c) Grants and Capital Projects
Pròiseactan Tabhartais agus Calpa**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/13/17 dated 7 February 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager which set out the current applications for grant funding to be determined and the current status of capital projects.

In this connection, there had been circulated separately a copy of supporting documentation as Booklet A.

The Committee **NOTED** the current status of capital projects and **AGREED** to allocate £15,000 from the Inverness Common Good Fund Other Properties Budget to the Merkinch Community Centre Windows Replacement Project.

The Committee also **APPROVED** the following applications for funding:-

- i. Flow Photography Festival - £15,000
- ii. Inverness BID
 1. Operation Respect Easter/Summer 2016 - £5,790
 2. Inverness Community Safety Partnership - £9,000
 3. Inverness Gull Project - £12,000
 4. Inverness Street Festival - £7,000
 5. Coach Ambassador - £9,750

It was **AGREED TO DEFER** the application for funding from The Ledge meantime pending submission of further financial details and confirmation of a viable business case.

14. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

Declaration of Interest – Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest in this item as an employee of Inverness College/UHI 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.

The following Minutes had been circulated for noting or approval as appropriate:-

- i. City of Inverness Area Committee held on 1 December 2016 – **NOTED**;
- ii. Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee held on 30 January 2017 – **APPROVED**; and
- iii. Events and Festivals Working Group held on 13 February 2017 – **APPROVED**.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm.