

**The Highland Council  
City of Inverness Area Committee**

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Inverness City Arts Working Group** held in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on 20 December 2016 at 9.00 am.

**Present:**

Mrs H Carmichael  
Mrs E McAllister  
Mr T Prag  
Mr G Ross

**Officials in Attendance:**

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager, Chief Executive's Office  
Mr J Kelman, Principal Project Manager, Development and Infrastructure  
Ms C Shankland, Exhibitions Officer, High Life Highland  
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator, Corporate Development Service

**Mr T Prag in the Chair**

**Business**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

The Working Group **NOTED** the following declarations of interest:

Item 5 – Mr G Ross (non-financial)

**3. Exclusion of the Public**

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

**4. Actions from Previous Minutes**

The Minutes of Meeting of the Inverness City Arts Working Group held on 19 October 2016 were circulated and **NOTED**.

Members were informed that the actions agreed at the last meeting had been completed and further progress would be reported on the media strategy under Item 7 of the agenda.

## 5. River Connections Public Art Project Programme

**Mr G Ross declared a non-financial interest in this item on the grounds of having a close relative who was a local artist, 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 ICArts 11/16 by the Inverness City Area Manager dated 14 December 2016 which invited Members to consider the recommendations to progress the projects noting that the recommendation from the Gathering Place Evaluation Panel would be reported early in 2017.

In presenting the report, the Working Group was given an update on progress in regard to each project. It was explained that the Evaluation Panel had met to assess tenders for the Gathering Place and had concluded that it was particularly difficult to identify a preferred tender as each submission was both technically and artistically strong. It was therefore decided to add a further stage whereby each artist would be requested to produce two or three concept ideas (not detailed designs) to use as a basis for the public consultation process with a view to selecting a preferred artist thereafter. It was explained that this would have a cost implication of up to £3,000 and approval of this was sought. The Working Group was also advised that negotiations had been concluded on closure of the previous contract and there was a detailed record of how the agreed settlement had been reached for audit purposes. Members would be advised of the detail in regard to the abortive project costs at the briefing in January 2017.

In terms of the access issues concerning the River Connections project, it was explained that the artist had put forward a number of potential solutions. Although acknowledging that there would be a cost implication, the Working Group was of the view that pavement studs would be the most appropriate solution and it was proposed that feedback on this be sought from the Access Panel.

At this point, Mrs H Carmichael assumed the Chair (9.40 am).

With regard to the Children's Water Feature, concerns were raised in respect of the preferred site (the stretch of the riverside between the infirmary bridge and the fisherman's carpark) and it was suggested that Ness Islands might be a more appropriate location.

At this point, Mr T Prag reassumed the Chair (9.42 am).

The Working Group acknowledged the importance of ensuring that the location fitted with local routes/points of interest. It was therefore proposed that the artist be requested to identify a suitable site at Ness Islands and that a consultation exercise be undertaken thereafter on both Ness Islands and the stretch of the riverside between the infirmary bridge and fisherman's carpark to establish the most appropriate location for the Children's Water Feature.

In addition, it was recommended that the Council's Graphic Designer be consulted on discussions in regard to The Trail to help with branding issues and to ensure a consistent approach was taken.

Following detailed discussion, the Working Group:-

- i. **NOTED** the progress made on the Gathering Place, Sculptural Destination, Rest Spaces and the Trail;
- ii. **NOTED** the progress that had been made by the Evaluation Panel in regard to the Gathering Place and **AGREED** that the tenderers be requested to produce two/three concept ideas which would be subject to public consultation and **APPROVED** the cost implication of this up to a total of £3,000;
- iii. **AGREED** that the Access Panel be consulted on the proposal to install pavement studs to address access issues concerning the River Connections project; and
- iv. **AGREED** that the artist be requested to identify a suitable site at Ness Islands and thereafter to proceed to the community consultation stage in respect of the stretch of the riverside between the infirmary bridge and fisherman's carpark and the Ness Islands site for the Children's Water Feature.

## 6. Financial Monitoring

There had been circulated Report No ICArts 12/16 by the Inverness City Area Manager dated 14 December 2016. The report set out the revenue monitoring position for the period to 30 November 2016 and showed the actual expenditure to date. In presenting the report, the Principal Project Manager advised that no further costs had been incurred since the last meeting.

Due to previous concerns raised, the Working Group discussed the most appropriate format in which to present the financial information, i.e. whether project build costs and management costs should be presented separately or as combined costs assigned to each project. Following due consideration, the Working Group felt that the initial format should continue, i.e. the project build costs and the management costs should be recorded under separate budget headings. In addition to this, the abortive costs, both in respect of project costs and the management fee, for the Gathering Place would be recorded as a total one-off cost. It was proposed that Members would be advised of this at the forthcoming briefing being held in January 2017.

Thereafter, the Group **NOTED** the content of the report and **AGREED** that the financial information continued to be presented via separate budget headings for project build and management costs and that Members be advised of this at the briefing in January 2017.

## 7. **Press relations and forthcoming PR opportunities and risks**

There had been circulated for noting the ICArts Media Strategy and outlined a proposed schedule of PR opportunities to be pursued. The City Area Manager and the Corporate Communications Manager gave an update on recent media coverage, set out the proposed media strategy, and advised Members of their governance role in terms of the decision-making process.

During discussion and consideration of the options to proactively engage the press, the Working Group stressed the importance of ensuring that key stakeholders and the media were kept informed of progress and to build on positive successful events such as “Meet the Artists”; that the message in regard to funding sources and economic and community benefits should continue to be reinforced; and requested that a timeline of key project milestones be prepared and circulated.

Following discussion, the Working Group **APPROVED** the media strategy as set out in the report and **AGREED** that a project timeline be circulated to the Group.

## 8. **Date of next Meeting**

The Group **NOTED** that, once finalised, notice would be issued of the date of the next meeting which was due to be held in February 2017.

The meeting ended at 10.35 am.