

**The Highland Council**

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, Inverness on Thursday 14 September 2017 at 10.30am.

**Present:**

Mr R Balfour	Mr A Jarvie
Mr B Boyd	Ms E Knox
Mr I Brown	Mr R Laird
Miss J Campbell	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mrs H Carmichael	Mr D Macpherson
Mr G Cruickshank	Mr R MacWilliam
Mrs M Davidson	Mrs B McAllister
Mr K Gowans	Mrs T Robertson
Mr A Graham	Mr G Ross
Mr J Gray	Mr C Smith

**Officials in Attendance:**

Mr S Fraser, Head of Corporate Governance, Corporate Development Service  
Mr C Stephen, Inverness Ward Manager, Corporate Development Service  
Mr G Reynolds, Inverness Events Manager, Corporate Development Service  
Mr G MacCormick, Senior Environmental Health Officer, Community Services  
Mr S Manning, Principal Traffic and Parking Officer, Community Services  
Mr J Taylor, Roads Operations Manager, Community Services  
Mr J Kelman, Principal Project Manager, Development and Infrastructure Service  
Ms R Cleland, Corporate Communications Manager, Chief Executive's Office  
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator, Corporate Development Service  
Miss J MacLennan, Principal Administrator, Corporate Development Service  
Miss J Green, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

**Also in attendance:**

Chief Inspector C Gough, Inverness Area Commander, Police Scotland  
Superintendent A Wright, C3IR Programme, Police Scotland

**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**

**Business**

**1. Apology for Absence  
Leisgeulan**

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mrs C Caddick, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair and Mr A Christie.

**2. Declarations of Interest  
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt**

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

Item 6 – Mr A Jarvie and Mr D Macpherson (non-financial)

**3. Recess Powers  
Cumhachdan Fosaìdh**

It was **NOTED** that the recess powers granted by the Council at its meeting on 29 June 2017 had not required to be exercised in relation to the business of this Committee.

**4. Appointments to Outside Bodies  
Suidheachadh Dhreuchdan gu Buidhnean on Taobh A-muigh**

The Inverness Townscape Heritage (TH) Project had been established to encourage regeneration of the historic built environment within Academy Street to improve the quality of life for those people who live, work and visit there and businesses that trade there. The TH Project Partnership, which consisted of a Partnership Board and Grant Sub-Committee, had been set up to direct and monitor the 5 year delivery and implementation phase from January 2016 to January 2021.

The TH Partnership Board was chaired by the Highland Council and would:-

- direct activity and monitor progress to fulfil the objectives of the project in accordance with the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Environment Scotland grant terms; and
- provide effective liaison with their representative bodies and act as ambassador for the TH Project.

The TH Grant Sub-committee would:-

- receive and evaluate grant applications and Officer recommendations; and
- agree and submit recommendations on all grant applications for the TH Partnership's consideration and determination.

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint:-

- i. Mr R Laird to chair the TH Partnership Board; and
- ii. Miss J Campbell and Mr R MacWilliam to the Inverness Townscape Heritage Partnership Grant Sub-Committee.

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

There had been circulated Report No CIA/28/17 dated 31 August 2017 by the Inverness Area Commander which provided a local summary update on progress with reference to the local priorities within the Highland 2014-2017 Policing Plan.

In this regard, a presentation was undertaken by Superintendent Alan Wright, C3IR (Contact, Command and Control Integration and Remodelling) Programme, Police Scotland on the ongoing work to relocate control room functions for North Division from Inverness to Dundee as part of the remodelling

of control rooms across Scotland during which he provided an explanation of his role with regard to the transition, an overview of the proposed changes, how local knowledge would be retained, how the transition would be scrutinised and how it would be delivered in a safe and secure manner including information on staff training. In this regard, he advised that this option would be presented to the Board of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) on 28 September 2017 for approval.

During discussion, Members made the following comments on control rooms:-

- assurance was sought and received that there would be no time lost during the transfer of 999 and 101 calls because the process was electronic;
- concern was expressed in relation to operators being able to identify the location of callers particularly in remote areas and on trunk roads. In this regard, it was suggested that call centre staff be provided with training on local knowledge and key landmarks on trunk roads;
- confirmation was sought and received that if it was necessary other emergency services could be consulted;
- assurance was sought and received that Members would be afforded the opportunity to speak to a local duty officer on request;
- concern was expressed in relation to identifying the location of callers using postcodes which could cover a large area. In this regard, confirmation was sought and received that system tests had been carried out to ensure data was robust;
- it was felt that the relocation of the Inverness control room was never wanted and it did not need to happen;
- currently the Inverness control room had 12 vacancies therefore it was felt that the decision to move the control room was almost pre-emptive;
- in relation to some reports of significant errors whereby emergency services were despatched to the wrong location, confirmation was sought and received that notable incidents would be recorded and could be made available to the SPA Board to carry out a scrutiny role;
- the need for effective communication in the event of significant incidents was emphasised;
- it was recognised that Superintendent Wright's role was operational and he was not present to defend the political decisions being made. Furthermore, there was recognition of the difficult position for the Police Service to rebuild the confidence due to the breach in trust caused by a commitment not being fulfilled in relation to the services being proposed for Inverness;
- confirmation was sought and received that a person's general location could be traced using their mobile phone network and in special circumstances more accurate data could be requested from mobile phone companies but this would not be carried out routinely; and
- concerns of constituents were highlighted in relation to the potential confusion over places in Scotland with similar names.

Superintendent Alan Wright then provided information on the proposals for the National Database Enquiry Unit and also provided assurances in relation to retaining the current staff in the Area Control Room in Inverness and the potential for further recruitment locally.

During discussion, Members expressed great disappointment that there would not be a single NDEU based in Inverness as promised and sought clarification on the options being presented to the SPA Board meeting on 28 September 2017 including the number of jobs involved.

Chief Inspector C Gough, Inverness Area Commander, Police Scotland then provided a summary of the progress report in relation to the 5 Priorities; Road Safety, Drug/Alcohol Misuse, Antisocial Behaviour, Dishonesty and Public Protection.

Also, in relation to earlier discussion, he confirmed he would be comfortable with call handlers transferring Members' calls to a duty inspector or one of three duty supervisors in Inverness particularly if Members had vital information to share.

During discussion, Members made the following comments on the area performance report:-

- concern was expressed in relation to the lack feedback provided to Members on incidents of antisocial behaviour and other crime so that Members could liaise with the community and connect services and stakeholders. In this regard, it was requested that the communication protocol be reviewed with a view to increasing collaboration between agencies;
- thanks were expressed for the reassurance from the Inverness Area Commander in relation to Members' calls being transferred to a duty officer on request;
- road side drug testing had been introduced in England and Wales so information was sought on the possibility of introducing it to Scotland and to the Highland area;
- there was concern that there was a lack of awareness about the effects of drug use on driving skills and that if stopped by the Police it would be detected;
- the hate crime statistics provided for the first quarter were more than the total number recorded during the previous year. In this regard, a further breakdown of the hate crime statistics in terms of categories was requested;
- it was suggested that the increase in hate crime statistics could be due to an increase in reporting of incidents;
- in relation to some unfortunate coverage of antisocial behaviour in the city centre during the summer, it was emphasised that there was a need for a more visible police presence to address public concerns regarding safety;
- concern was expressed regarding shoplifting and vandalism which was exacerbated by an increase in gambling shops but was not always reported; and
- the Provost had met with the Inverness Area Commander, Area Divisional Commander, Inverness BID and City Manager to discuss concerns which had been raised and had been provided with reassurance that the City Centre would get the attention it deserved.

Thereafter, the Committee scrutinise and **NOTED** the progress report and updates in relation to the 5 Priorities; Road Safety, Drug/Alcohol Misuse, Antisocial Behaviour, Dishonesty and Public Protection and **AGREED** that the

possibility of introducing road side drug testing be investigated and reported back to Members and that a further breakdown of the hate crime statistics in terms of categories be provided to Members.

The Committee also **AGREED** that clarification of the options being presented to the Scottish Police Authority Board on the National Database Enquiry Unit including the number of jobs involved with each option be provided to Members as soon as possible.

**6. City Events and Festivals – Review of 2017-18, Proposals for 2018-19 and Opportunities in 2022**  
**Tachartasan agus Fèisean – Prògram Thachartasan 2018/19**

**Declarations of Interest – Mr A Jarvie and Mr D Macpherson declared non-financial interests in this item as Directors 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 their interests did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion.**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/29/17 dated 29 August 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

Mr G Ross, the Chair of the Events and Festivals Working Group introduced the Events Programme for 2018/19 during which he highlighted the many free events and significant partnership working and sought an increase in funding from the Common Good Fund to meet security and legislation requirements. Furthermore, he explained that the Events and Festivals Working Group would take a new approach this year in which each Member of the Working Group would be the principle spokesperson for each event. Finally, he announced the line-up for the Hogmanay Show which would be Hò-rò, Skippinish and Skerryvore.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- congratulations were expressed to the Events Manager and his team for delivering another successful year of events;
- concern was expressed in relation to the proposed increase in the budget allocation from the Common Good Fund;
- the importance of the wider economic impact was highlighted;
- the underspend of £20k was welcomed and an explanation was sought and received that the cost of £141,650 for equipment was the total cost for the year for stages, PA systems and hire of toilets;
- there was concern that the forecasted budget figures were not genuine and in this regard further clarification was sought to allow for greater scrutiny;
- some information in relation the budget was subject to confidentiality but assurance was provided that Members could review the budget line by line with the Events Manager;
- in terms of commercial income it was important to consider who benefited from the events such as shops and bars and to ensure that they were making a contribution;

- it was preferred that surplus funds be used for winter payments instead of the events budget therefore an explanation of the impact on the events programme of increasing the events budget was sought;
- the forecasted increase in the cost of events reflected the additional requirement in terms of security and licensing; and
- it was intended to introduce merchandising and increase sponsorship to reduce the expenditure from the Common Good Fund which would be reflected back to Committee in due course.

The Committee **APPROVED** the:-

- i. 2018/19 programme and the allocation of a budget in the sum of £340,000 from the Inverness Common Good Fund Budget for 2018/19 detailed in appendix 1 to the report; and
- ii. 2018/19 Action Plan detailed in appendix 2 to the report.

## **7. Inverness City Centre Trade Waste Project Sealladh-sràide a' Bhaile – Leasachadh Ghoireasan**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/30/17 dated 30 August 2017 by the Director of Community Services.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- in welcoming the trade waste project, the fundamental principle was highlighted that the ownership of waste belonged to businesses who produced it and was not the responsibility of the Council;
- caution should be exercised when considering extensions to ensure that the project was effective;
- there was some concern with the timescale for implementing the project;
- there was some doubt in relation to the responses from some businesses and therefore to ensure a positive response it was necessary to have strong enforcement in place and to work with and clearly explain the reasons for introducing these measures to businesses;
- there was a need for a clear communication strategy to raise awareness of the impact on the environment of the overall volume of waste across Highlands and to encourage initiatives to reduce waste;
- it was requested that the pilot area included premises on both sides of the street to avoid confusion and resentment between businesses;
- particularly concern was expressed in relation to the condition of bins on private land on Strothers Lane which was out with the Council's control;
- there was an opportunity for the Council to capitalise on the market for the collection of commercial waste;
- it was suggested that the pilot be extended to the entire city centre due to there being evidence from other city centres that the project was effective; and
- it was important to ensure that the bins were in a good state of repair.

The Committee **APPROVED** the overall vision and objectives of the Inverness City Centre trade waste project as provided in the report and **AGREED** that the Pilot Project would apply to both sides of the street within the pilot area and that thereafter consideration would be given to rolling the project out across the whole of the City Centre area.

**The meeting adjourned for lunch at 12.50 pm and resumed at 13.35 pm.**

**8. Parking and Enforcement  
Uairean Cur an Gnìomh Parcadh Dì-eucoirichte**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/31/17 dated 29 August 2017 by the Director of Community Services.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- whilst Members supported a one year trial of a 15 minute Free parking period, some were of the view that this should be extended to 20-30 minutes. However, other Members believed that any longer a period would change the nature of the initiative and would lead the way towards all day free town centre parking;
- it was suggested that the Eastgate Centre might wish to consider a similar 15 minute free Parking period;
- free parking bays would increase traffic in the city centre and it would be vital to monitor the impact this would have on the bus network, particularly in Queensgate. In addition, this increase would add to pollution and it sent out mixed messages when the Council was also trying to get cars out of the city centre;
- given the demand for parking in what was a small city centre, public transport needed to be taken account of together with more sustainable initiatives to encourage shoppers to use car parks. This could include the introduction of a hop on/off electric bus, a proposal that had been raised in the previous Council;
- the location of these free parking bays would be important in relation to businesses;
- a similar trial had taken place in Perth and detail of how this had operated in practice was requested, particularly in regards to what fact-based evidence they had used to assess the initiative; and
- concern was expressed that enforcement would be carried out 7 days per week, unlike other Scottish city centres where parking restrictions were removed for part of the day on Sundays, particularly of benefit to church attenders. The report suggested that this would incur a budget pressure and Mrs J Campbell requested additional information.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** the advertising of amendments for the pay and display spaces listed in item 3.5 subject to funding being sourced;
- ii. **AGREED** a one year trial of a 15-minute free parking period, subject to funding being sourced as detailed in section 4;
- iii. **NOTED** the position on seven day enforcement and charging as detailed in section 5; and
- iv. **NOTED** the Loading/Unloading clarification and Dispensation Policy detailed in section 6.

**9. Winter Maintenance Plan for 2017/18  
Plana Obair-gleidhidh Geamhraidh airson 2017/18**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/32/17 dated 24 August 2017 by the Director of Community Services.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- although fundamentally the same as last year's Plan, the importance of discussing it at Ward Business Meetings was emphasised;
- a number of routes were highlighted as being classed as "secondary" routes but were in fact approach roads to schools. Although they might not be bus routes, streets around schools generally should be considered for gritting prior to 9 am;
- the agreement with Bear Scotland for gritting the Dalcataig/Dalchreichart road was welcomed and it was hoped that this would continue; and
- the arrangements for gritting roads in Fort Augustus were provided together with confirmation of the close working arrangement in place with the Fort Augustus Community Company for gritting the pavements.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Winter Maintenance Plan for the Inverness Area, which included the priority road lists and maps presented in appendices B and C.

**10. U4035 Henderson Road, Inverness – Partial Deletion  
U4035 Rathad MhicEanraig, Inbhir Nis – Pàirt Dhubhadh Às**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/33/17 dated 18 August 2017 by the Director of Community Services.

The Committee **APPROVED** the proposed partial deletion of the U4035 Henderson Road, Inverness.

**11. Inverness Common Good Fund  
Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis**

**(a) Financial Monitoring  
Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/34/17 dated 21 August 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

In relation to the Logman Salt Store confirmation was sought, and received, that the Council paid rent to the Common Good Fund.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the financial monitoring report to July 2017;
- ii. **HOMOLOGATED** the expenditure from the City Promotions Budget; and
- iii. **AGREED** to the storage relocation of the City of Inverness Christmas Lights to the former Longman Salt Store at a cost of £9,668.



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

There had been circulated Report No CIA/35/17 dated 31 August 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

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 **APPROVED** the application for funding from LEAP Sports Scotland for £7,900.

**(c) Longman Landfill and Travelling Persons Site**  
**Làrach-sgudail agus Làrach Luchd-siubhail an Longman**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/36/17 dated 4 September 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

During discussion, the background leading to the former Inverness District Council's decision not to seek any rental payment in respect of the Travelling People's site was provided. Although the amounts involved were not significant, Members agreed that it was the principle of the matter that was important. It was also suggested that this demonstrated historically Elected Representatives' failing to properly look after the Common Good Fund.

In relation to the former Longman Landfill Site the time taken to identify any decision establishing the Council's occupation was acknowledged. It was questioned if this was best use of officers' time and Members accepted the situation as was. The long term aspiration was for significant development to take place on this site which, in future years, would benefit the Common Good.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the terms of reference provided by the Audit and Scrutiny Committee report;
- ii. the status of the Travelling People's Site and **AGREED** to instigate a commercial arrangement receiving Market Value 'Rent' for the Site, instruct the Inverness City Area Manager to establish the Market Value rent for the Site and thereafter invite the Director of Development and Infrastructure to negotiate commercial letting arrangements for the use of the Site by the Council as a Traveling People's Site; and
- iii. the position in respect of the land forming the former Longman Landfill Site.

**12. Street Naming**  
**Ainmeachadh Sràide**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/37/17 dated 22 August 2017 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

The Committee **HOMOLOGATED** the naming of new streets for:-

- i. new housing development, Merkinch Glendoe Terrace area (53 properties);
- ii. commercial development, Inverness Airport Business Park;
- iii. new housing development, Tornagrain application 2;
- iv. new Flatted development, Land East of the Free Church of Scotland, off Tower Road, (27 Flats);
- v. new housing development, Parks Farm Phase 1 (102 properties);
- vi. new housing development, Slackbuie (95 properties); and
- vii. new housing development, plot J, land South of Culduthel Smithy (18 properties).

### 13. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

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

- i. City of Inverness Area Committee held on 19 June 2017 – **NOTED**;
- ii. Inverness City Arts Working Group held on 10 August 2017 – **APPROVED**; and
- iii. Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee held on 21 August 2017 – **APPROVED** subject to, in relation to Item 5 (Requests for Financial Assistance) Declarations of Interest, it was Mr G Ross, not Mr A Graham, who had declared an interest as a member of the Town Twinning Committee.

The meeting ended at 2.45 pm.