

Agenda Item	<b>8</b>
Report No	<b>CIA/39/18</b>

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** City of Inverness Area Committee

**Date:**

**Report Title:** City Events and Festivals – Half Year Review of 2018-19; Proposals for 2019-20 and Riverlights; Opportunities in 2022.

**Report By:** Inverness City Area Manager

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report;

- i. updates Members on the delivery of the 2018/19 Events and Festivals Programme;
- ii. provides details of the proposed 2019/20 Events and Festivals Programme and Action Plan;
- iii. updates Members on progress with the development of the Signature Events programme under consideration for 2022.

1.2

- iv. updates Members on progress with the development of the Riverlights event; and seeks approval a) for its suggested format; and b) for work to commence on the development of an event plan and budget for future consideration by the City of Inverness and Area Committee

### Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Approve the proposed 2019/20 programme (**Appendix 1**); and
- ii. Approve the allocation of a budget in the sum of £340,000 from the Inverness Common Good Fund Budget for 2019/20.
- iii. Approve the proposed 2019-20 Action Plan (**Appendix 2**)
- iv. Note the progress made on the development of the Signature Events programme under consideration for 2022 (**Appendix 3**)
- v. Approve the suggested format for the Riverlights event (**Appendix 4**); and authorise the development of an event plan and budget for future consideration by the City of Inverness and Area Committee;

### **3 2018-19 Events and Festivals Programme Update**

- 3.1 Members are asked to note that the 2018-19 programme is on course to meet the aims and objectives listed in the Action Plan previously agreed by the City of Inverness Area Committee.
- 3.2 The 2018-19 programme is currently forecasted to be delivered within its budget of £340,000 following the successful delivery of the Inverness Highland Games Weekend's programme.
- 3.3 A significant piece of work has been undertaken supporting the successful establishment of the temporary traffic management plans to be used around Bught Park when major events are delivered. Event related vehicular and pedestrian traffic issues, bridge congestion and bridge loading issues, event security and counter terrorism issues continue to be given the highest priority by the Highland Council and its partners at all stages of the event planning and event licencing process.
- 3.4 Members are asked to note that the purpose of the work undertaken by the Safety Advisory Group is to ensure that all the events staged in Inverness and the surrounding areas are delivered safely; and that these events continue to be delivered with exemplary safety records.
- 3.5 The duration of any delays or inconveniences caused by major events remains under constant consideration and review; and minimising delays has been greatly assisted by the much appreciated support given by Local Residents, Local Businesses, Ward Members and the Ballifeary Community Council.
- 3.6 Security issues will continue to be given the highest priority by the Council and its partners for the foreseeable future.
- 3.7 The Events and Festivals Working Group has supported the design, promotion, organisation and delivery of a number of additional events with various partners during the period under review. The Working Group has also supported the visit of two film crews from Italy and the USA during the Inverness Highland Games weekend; and Members will be supplied with links to enable them to view these two programmes as soon as they become available.
- 3.8 Each of the events contained in the Council's Events and Festivals programme is automatically reviewed during the debrief process. It remains true that 99% of the improvements made in the Events Industry, maybe more, are made during the debrief process; and the one thing that all of the Council's events have in common is that they are being constantly changed. This leads to two significant announcements to start the preview of the proposed programme for 2019-20.

### **4. 2019- 20 Events and Festivals Programme**

- 4.1 On 8<sup>th</sup> September 2016 the Scottish Government announced that their programme of themed years would move to a two yearly cycle with effect from 2018.

4.2 While 2019 will therefore not feature a national theme, here in Inverness; welcoming the European Pipe Band Championships which was secured by local promoter Les Kidger and his colleagues at LCCLive; and (subject to Members approval), launching Riverlights (see below); should ensure that Inverness enjoys a significant boost to its events schedule. In addition consideration is already being given to the creation of fringe activities in support of the European Pipe Band Championships; and expanding both the Inverness Highland Games and Ness Island Halloween Show Weekends.

4.3 It is also anticipated that 2019-2020 will include preparations with the Council's partners for the Year of Scotland's Coasts and Waters which will run throughout 2020. The theme has been chosen to support Scotland's marine and coastal tourism sector, and an expansion of the city's events programme towards the mouth of the River Ness and the northern entrance to the Caledonian Canal is emerging as an exciting and achievable possibility.

5. The proposed Core Events and Festivals programme and budget for 2019/20 is shown on **Appendix 1**.

#### 5.1 **2019-20 Budget**

The proposed Budget for 2018/19 is £340,000 and includes an allowance for inflation. Since its establishment the Events and Festival Programme has been successful in attracting many thousands of visitors to the City, to the economic benefit of many of the Hotels, Guest Houses, businesses and workers in Inverness and the surrounding area. The Events staged in the traditional 'shoulder months' of September and October in particular have helped extend the Summer Tourist Season; and the Red Hot Highland Fling continues to make a significant impact at Hogmanay.

5.2 Commercial sponsorship continues to be a high priority. Every effort is being made to maximise opportunities and It is expected that in-kind sponsorship and discounts similar to those secured in the current financial year (circa. £80-90,000) will be achieved in 2019-20.

5.3 Marketing and merchandising opportunities based on the Events and Festivals Programme are being developed.

### 6. **Events and Festivals Working Group Action Plan**

6.1 The 2019/20 Action Plan is shown on **Appendix 3**, which was previously adjusted to show revised partnership working arrangements following the formation of the Inverness Events Advisory Group; and has now been updated to include the Caledonian Canal 2022 Group which has recently commenced work.

6.2 The Inverness Events Advisory Group has delivered a revised structure to ensure more effective partnership working; and will be meeting next month to redefine its role and review its aims and objectives following the establishment of the

Caledonian Canal 2022 Group.

- 6.3 The CC2022 Group are currently giving consideration to a number of options and opportunities for the celebrations planned for events in 2022. A brief overview of 2022 is presented in **Appendix 4**.

## **7. 2019/20 Programme Expenditure**

- 7.1 The decision by Members to give early approval for the programme in order to enable the Council and other stakeholders to promote events programme earlier has proven to be extremely effective. Once again Members are asked to note that no expenditure will be incurred before the start of the financial year 2019/20.

## **8. Governance**

- 8.1 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. The revised 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.

## **9. Implications**

- 9.1 Resource –

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

Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – The Council will ensure that the events supported by the Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group Programme meet all the relevant standards in terms of providing an environment which can be enjoyed by persons of any ability

Climate Change/Carbon Clever – 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.

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

Risk – 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.

Gaelic – All Policy requirements are adhered to

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Designation: Inverness City Area Manager

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Author: Inverness Events Manager  
Inverness City Area Manager

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 2019-20 Events and Festivals Programme & Budget

Appendix 2 Events and Festivals Working Group Action Plan

Appendix 3 Appendix 4 2022

Appendix 4 Riverlights

## Appendix 1

### Events and Festivals Core Programme & Budget (2019-20)

Event	Budget	Start Date	End Date
Events Office	45000		
Highland Games Weekend	52000	19/7/19	20/7/19
Halloween	44000	26/10/19	27/10/19
Civic Bonfire	25500	5/11/19	5/11/19
Christmas Lights	9000	17/11/19	17/11/19
Winter Wonderland	16000	13/12/19	15/12/19
Hogmanay	118500	31/12/19	1/1/20
Summer Marketing	15000		
Winter Marketing	15000		
<b>Total</b>	340,000		
<b>Provisional Dates - TBC</b>			
European Piping Welcome		27/6/19	29/6/19
Kirking of the Council		8/9/19	8/9/19
Riverlights		28/11/19	30/11/19

Notes:

The budget for 2018/19 is £340,000. The current spend is reported in the Inverness Common Good Fund Monitoring Report.

# Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group Action Plan 2019-20

## **1. Introduction**

### 1.1 Goal

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

### 1.2 Aims and Objectives

To develop Events and Festivals throughout the year 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 and tour operators 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 Caledonian Canal 2022 Working Group and the Inverness Events Advisory Group and their partners; 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 Programme by continuing to allow them to grow organically, while focusing on both the cultural heritage of the City and the Highlands and the introduction of new events.

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 the University of Highland and Islands.

Work with partners to identify and maximise sponsorship and income stream opportunities.

### 3. Commercial Events

In conjunction with High Life Highland and others, develop opportunities to use, and promote the use of, Council controlled premises such as the Town House, Northern Meeting Park and Bught Park.

Continue to enhance relationships with promoters and tour operators to ensure that opportunities are not lost to link their events or visits with the Common Good Fund's (Council's) own events and festivals programme;

Work with promoters and tour operators to identify ways in which their events can be enhanced by linking them with either other commercial events or promotional activity (linked to the Marketing Strategy) in Inverness

Identify local events or significant dates which have potential to develop into national and international events.

### 4. Close Partnership Working

In addition to the work undertaken with the Inverness Events Advisory Group; enhance links with other Local Authorities, National Bodies and appropriate groups to create cohesion and coordination within the Events programme and its marketing.

Continue to support and develop the multi-agency Safety Advisory Group approach to event design and implementation utilised with others

Ensure that the communication between stakeholders and partners is clear with a consistent message being applied, using Forums when necessary;

Continue to 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 Inverness Lochness Tourism Bid team following 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 consistent base line figure for the value of the events staged by the Council in Inverness; and identify those events and opportunities where the economic impact could be significantly increased. Work with external events organisers in determining the economic impact of their events; and develop strategies and take actions to increase their impact, wherever possible, to the Council's events and festivals programme.



## 6. Media Engagement

Ensure that a consistent message is developed through media engagement about the significant benefits that events and event tourism bring to the City; and in support of the aims and objectives and culture of companies within the Highlands and beyond; working with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Inverness BID, Loch Ness Inverness Tourism BID and others to identify and develop opportunities.

## 7. Cultural Links

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

Support the work of the existing, and newly established, multi-cultural groups based in Inverness and continue to assist with the development of their events.

## 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

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.

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 Annual review by the City of Inverness Area Committee.

## 2022

Members may recall the Council's successful creation and delivery of the Highland Homecoming programme in 2014; when significant grant funding was attracted to the Highlands when the Council alerted various national agencies and event organisers to the opportunity that it had identified to connect a number of new and existing events which were co-incidentally occurring in and around Inverness that year.

The next similar alignment of events will occur in 2022 when celebrations to mark the bicentenary of the opening of the Caledonian Canal are scheduled to take place. It is clear that this celebration has tremendous potential to be of global interest and; if it is organised in a similar fashion to 1822; could consist of a series of events stretching from Inverness to Fort Augustus and onward to Fort William. At a local level, also scheduled for 2022 in Inverness are the bicentenary of the first Highland Games (the True Highland Games sponsored by the Northern Meeting) staged in 1822; and the centenaries of the Inverness Music Festival and the founding of Highland Rugby Club

Members were previously advised that Scottish Canals, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Council had agreed to bring together a number of stakeholders to consider how to take these opportunities forward; and meetings were held in Inverness on March 26<sup>th</sup> and July 6<sup>th</sup> 2018

As this was the inaugural meeting in March, each organisation was asked to set out what they believed the scale and potential of the CC2022 programme of events could be. The Inverness Events Manager delivered a well-received presentation which highlighted the foundations that could be made for a successful festival by building on the synergy between the Inverness Events and Festivals programme; the proposed Riverlights project and the 2020 Year of Scotland's Coast and Waters themed year; and it was noted that the celebrations in 2022 aligned with the scheduled opening of Inverness Castle.

It was agreed that the bicentenary of the opening of the Caledonian Canal in 2022 could be an event of significance, and could be used to relaunch the canal to a national and international market; and deliver a legacy in respect of the infrastructure on the canal.

At the second meeting held in July; the appointment of Richard Millar (Scottish Canals Director of Infrastructure as chair of the Caledonian Canal 2022 Group was confirmed.

Members are asked to note that the CC2022 Group is now undertaking research and consultation with a number of stakeholders and agencies and a further update will be provided in due course.

### Riverlights Update

As previously reported the Events and Festivals Working Group has been working in partnership with a number of organisations on the development of a proposal for consideration by the City of Inverness Area Committee for a pilot Inverness riverside projection and street festival event called Riverlights.

Discussions held to date with representatives of the University of the Highlands and Islands; Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Eden Court Theatre, Eastgate Shopping Centre, InvernessLochNess TBID, VisitScotland, Inverness BID and EventScotland have been very supportive; with consideration of the projection based events staged in Durham (Lumiere), Aberdeen (Spectra), Hull (Festival of Light) Leeds (Light Night), Newcastle (Great Exhibition of the North) and Perth (Riverside Light Nights); proving most useful in shaping Riverlights.

Riverlights will be built on a foundation provided by events previously staged in Inverness and opportunities which have been identified as enabling Inverness to offer a unique experience for locals and visitors to enjoy.

Members may recall that it was indicated that Riverlights might be staged in the Spring of 2019; but as the potential of the event emerged during the course of discussions, it was agreed that the Autumn of 2019 was more practical; and the Spring of 2020 should be retained as an option.

It is anticipated that (subject to obtaining all the necessary approvals, permissions and financial support necessary to stage this event); that dates around Thursday 28th – Saturday 30th 2019; which would see Riverlights staged as part of Scotland's Winter Festival Programme, would be used.

It is planned that the event will be delivered by the Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group using the Multi-Agency approach on behalf of the City of Inverness Area Committee. This would provide an opportunity for UHI students and the Eden Court Creative Team to contribute to the development of the creative side of Riverlights at all stages of the process.

It is expected that the pilot "Riverlights" event would incorporate sites that have been successfully used by Evanton based company Arts in Motion at events previously staged in Inverness; and a number of additional activities would be staged to animate the Riverside and Inverness City Centre areas during the show.

It should be noted that additional Riverlights events could be incorporated into the national Themed Years Programme which is being led by VisitScotland; with the Year of Scotland's Coasts and Waters being celebrated in 2020; and the Year of Scotland's Stories being the focus in 2022.

The Projection Locations currently under consideration for Riverlights are:

These are:-

Projections

Eden Court Theatre

Falcon Square

Inverness Castle Front

Inverness Castle Viewing Tower

Abertaff House  
 Inverness Town House Front  
 Inverness Town House Rear  
 St Andrews Cathedral outside  
 St Andrew Cathedral inside  
 Inverness Museum and Art Gallery  
 Ness Bridge  
 Victorian Market

A consultant, Stewart Miller has been engaged to support this process and he has completed this initial SWOT Analysis of the event.

### SWOT Analysis of Proposed Riverlights Event

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for Riverlights can be summarised as follows:

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot project (get to test the market with a limited budget)</li> <li>• Stunning natural beauty &amp; heritage of proposed event site</li> <li>• Outdoor lighting shows are by their nature, visually stimulating &amp; spectacular</li> <li>• Perfect event for sharing on social media, generating more interest</li> <li>• Local involvement/organic event (keeping money in the area)</li> <li>• Generating tourist visits off-season</li> <li>• Installing more pride in the city</li> <li>• Some buildings/sites are already illuminated, so some lighting equipment is in place already</li> <li>• City centre location provides a local captive audience</li> <li>• Another addition to the Inverness City growing events portfolio</li> <li>• Expertise &amp; experience of the local events team &amp; core suppliers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot project (holding back potential)</li> <li>• Though a pilot, still costly to stage (e.g. additional lighting equipment, experienced contractors, event traffic control, stewards, etc.)</li> <li>• Labour-intensive (what you financially save on not appointing an overall event contractor, you lose with management staff time requirement)</li> <li>• No entrance fee, instead relying on donations (area too large to fence off, plus it is a city centre location where people need access)</li> <li>• Requires main traffic routes to be closed for pedestrians only (though after 6pm each night of the event)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local captive audience</li> <li>• Secure involvement of key local 'groups' (e.g. creative sector, shops, accommodation providers, etc.)</li> <li>• Local inclusion e.g. individuals can become involved (e.g. fancy dress, carry lit objects, etc.)</li> <li>• Generate levels of excitement, with a visually-stimulating event – bringing more people to see the event</li> <li>• Opportunity to offer this format to other Highland settlements, for a fee (after year one)</li> <li>• Framework can easily upscale, to cover extended geographical areas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather dependant (bad weather could result in cancellation)</li> <li>• Approval &amp; funding not secured for event</li> </ul>

