

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

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held in the 1st Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Monday 5 August 2019 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Mr B Boyd
Miss J Campbell
Mrs H Carmichael
Mr G Cruickshank

Mr A Graham
Mrs E McAllister
Mr G Ross

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, City Manager's Office
Mr S Taylor, Civic and Facilities Team Leader, Corporate Resources Service
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Chief Executive's Service

Mr G Ross in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs C Caddick and Mr A Jarvie.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

Item 5, Booklet A – Mr G Ross – (Non-Financial)
Item 5, Booklet A – Mrs E McAllister – (Non-Financial)
Item 5, Booklet B – Mrs H Carmichael – (Non-Financial)

3. Exclusion of the Public

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

4. Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee Annual Report

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/08/19 dated 25 July 2019 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that Members of Inverness Common Good Fund Sub Committee were not trustees of the Inverness Common Good Fund, but the Committee had a legal duty to look after the funds of the Common Good. The funds were to benefit the residents of the Former Burgh of Inverness and applicants

work was to give principal benefit to as wide a range of the Residents of the Former Burgh as reasonably possible. The term 'reasonably possible' was to take away the focus of where a project was physically based, as projects outwith the former burgh could bring substantial benefits to the City of Inverness.

It was suggested that there should be reference in the report to highlight that some of the activities of the Common Good Fund were out with the powers of this Committee and reserved to the City of Inverness Committee. It was confirmed that the report would be amended to reflect this.

The Chair on behalf of the Committee expressed the Committee's appreciation to Officials supporting the Committee for all their hard work and professional advice on Common Good Fund matters. Members of the Committee also expressed their appreciation to the Chair of the Committee for his assistance on the work of the Committee.

The Sub-Committee **AGREED**, subject to the amendment highlighted above, to the report being presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 29 August 2019.

5. Requests for Financial Assistance 2018/19

Declaration of Interests –

The following declared a non-financial interest but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interest did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion of the applications:-

- **Mr G Ross and Mrs E McAllister, Camanachd Association on behalf of the Bught Park Users Group**
- **Mr G Ross, Inverness Netball Club**
- **Mrs H Carmichael, Visit Inverness Loch Ness Ltd**

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/09/19 dated 25 July 2019 by the Inverness City Area Manager. There had also been circulated separately a copy of the applications and any supporting documentation as Booklets A, B, C and D.

It was noted that in terms of sums advanced but not yet released for projects, these were being monitored to ensure that if applicants were not able to take up the funding, then these funds could be released for other projects.

Also, in relation to projects awarded funding, if there were other budgets that this funding could come from, then this would be arranged, thereby releasing Common Good funding for other applications. This approach was supported by the Committee.

Booklet A

The Sub-Committee determined applications for funding of up to £10,000 as follows:-

Camanchd Association on behalf of the Bught Park Users Group (£7,500 sought) **REFUSED**
Bught Park Feasibility Study

The application was refused as, the Bught Park was not a Common Good Fund asset and it was for the Council and High Life Highland who administered the park on the Council's behalf to address maintenance issues of the park which had been highlighted. Further, the applicant had considerable funds and would be able to fund the Feasibility study on its own; the application was not at a stage where a project was being proposed and therefore it was unknown what the principal benefits would be to the City of Inverness.

It was also **AGREED** that consideration would be given at the next meeting on how the Committee should deal with future applications for Feasibility Studies.

Northern Meeting Park Group (£8,750 sought) **DEFERRED**
Options Appraisal and business plan - Northern Meeting Park, Inverness

The Committee Deferred the application in order to allow collaborative proposals to be developed by the Events and Festivals Working Group focussed on realising the potential of the Northern Meeting Park for benefit of the Community.

NessBook Fest (£2,750sought) **APPROVED £2,750**
NessBook Fest 2019

This was a very successful event and was supported by the Committee.

Inverness Foodstuff SCIO (£9,750 sought) **APPROVED £7,640**
Operations Manager for Inverness Foodstuff

Given that the request was for revenue funding which was not usually supported by the Committee, the amount awarded was reduced to £7, 640 for funding towards a laptop, hall rental, insurance and website .

It was **AGREED** that at the next meeting consideration would be given to how the Committee should deal with future applications for revenue funding.

Inverness Shinty Club (£4,240 sought) **APPROVED £3,000**
Purchase of Portable Lighting

While supporting the project, the Committee did not support the 89% funding requested and reduced the award to £3,000.

Apex Scotland (£7,603 sought) **APPROVED £7,603**
Donkey Brae & Viewpoint

This was a much valued amenity site and the project supported employment of vulnerable members of the Community and was supported by the Committee.

Inverness Netball Club (£1,821 sought) **APPROVED £1,821**
Establishing a Junior Section for Inverness Netball Club - Purchase of Equipment.

The amount sought was supported by the Committee.

Inverness Local History Forum (£500 sought) **APPROVED £500**
The Northern Barrage: US Navy Presence During WW1 in the Highlands

WW1 had been an important aspect of City life and the project was supported.

MS Therapy Centre Inverness Ltd T/A The Oxygen Works (£4,000 sought) **APPROVED £4,000**

Waiving of rent and general maintenance costs

This was a successful project and the amount sought was supported.

Sottish Ensemble (£3,000 sought) **APPROVED £1,500**
2019/20 Inverness Creative Learning and Participation programme

The project was supported but the amount awarded was reduced to £1,500.

Highland Hospice (£10,000 sought) **APPROVED £10,000**
Modernisation and refurbishment of the Ness Islands Railway

The project was supported by the Committee.

Booklet B

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to make the following recommendations to the City of Inverness Area Committee in respect of the following applications for funding of over £10,000 as follows:-

Special Needs Action Project (SNAP) (£17,500 sought) **APPROVED £17,500**
Governance and organisational Review Project

The Committee were very supportive of the project on the basis that it would be a one off payment.

Visit Inverness Loch Ness Ltd (VILN) (£20,000 sought) **APPROVED £20,000**
Support to Sales Team promoting Inverness for Business Tourism

Tourism was key to the City and Area and the organisation represented the area very well and therefore the Committee supported the project.

The Ledge (£25,000 sought) **APPROVED £25,000**
The Ledge - Climbing Walls and Adventure Sports Training - SCIO

Having previously pledged funding for this project in order that the applicant could build up a funding package, the Committee supported the award of this additional grant in order for the project to proceed.

At this point Councillor A Graham left the meeting.

Booklet C – Conference Support

Scottish Provincial Press (£8,000 sought) **REFUSED**
Highlands & Islands Rural Economy Conference & Awards

This was a very high cost for a one day conference and it was suggested that the applicants could charge participants for attending. Also it was noted that the applicants were not contributing to the cost of the conference and given that there was not sufficient justifiable benefit for the City, the Committee did not support the application.

Booklet D – Partnership Working

Inverness BID Ltd (£2,5000 sought) **APPROVED £2,500**
Operation Respect - Task Team October 2019

There was justifiable benefit in this project in providing a safe and secure City Centre and therefore the application was supported.

The Chair highlighted that it was good news that the Common Good Fund supported projects from a wide range of organisations to the value of £350,000 each year which was a great achievement. It was noted that there was limited funding available for applications received for the remainder of the year.

6. Evaluations Forms

There had been circulated and **NOTED** evaluation forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects. The Committee welcomed the evaluation forms which would also be used for audit purposes.

7. Civic Hospitality Requests

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/10/19 dated 24 July 2019 by the Inverness City Area Manager which listed the applications received for Civic Hospitality from the Inverness Common Good Fund.

In this connection there had been circulated separately a copy of the applications and any supporting documentation as Booklet E.

The Sub-Committee determined the applications listed in Appendix 2 to the report and detailed in Booklet E as follows:

Peatlands Partnership **REFUSED**
Flow Country Conference (£1,837.18)

Refused as there was not sufficient benefit to the residents of the City.

The Queen's Own Highlanders Regimental Association **AGREED**
Unveiling of Queen's Own Highlander Statue (£3,510) **Up to £1,200**

There was limited benefit to the City and the event was split between two locations. However, given the City's military heritage, the Committee supported a reduced award of up to £1,200, based on an assessment of costs for the event.

The Highland Council **AGREED**
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities £3,150.68

The North Sea Commission **AGREED**
The North Sea Commission NSC (Energy and Climate Change Group ECCG) £741.63

Merkinch Community Centre **AGREED an**
Celebration of Achievement in Honour of Anne McCreddie **afternoon tea**
(£2,204.68) **event hosted**
by the
Provost

The Committee, while not supporting the amount sought, did support an afternoon tea event hosted by the Provost to celebrate the achievement of Anne McCreddie.

Highland Wheelchair Curling Club **AGREED**
8th Highland Wheelchair Curling Triples Competition 2019 £2,500

Planit Scotland **REFUSED**
145th Anniversary Innes Mackay Law Firm (£3,074.68)

Refused as not enough justifiable benefit. A private let of the Town House for this event would be offered to the applicant.

8. Town House Letting Charges

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the current Town House Letting Charges.

9. Trip to St Valery

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/11/19 dated 18 July 2019 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

It was advised that the visit was a success with the events cementing the strong bond between St Valery en Caux and the City of Inverness. Unfortunately,

additional costs had to be incurred due to the planned Strike Action at Inverness Airport.

The Sub-Committee ;-

- i. **NOTED** the outcome of the Trip to St Valery en Caux; and
- ii. **AGREED** the additional costs that were incurred for Travel due to the threatened Strike Action at Inverness Airport.

10. Cavell Gardens

The Sub Committee **AGREED** to **HOMOLOGATE** the decision to approve the works to Cavell Garden to bring it up to standard for the judging of the best Kept War Memorial Competition at a cost of £2,800 for the Other Properties Budget.

11. Town House Planters

The Sub Committee **AGREED** to **HOMOLOGATE** the decision to purchase two metal planters for outside the Town House at a cost of £4,792.50 to be paid from the Town House Maintenance Budget.

12. Summer in Scotland and ICT/Ross County Supplements

The Sub Committee **AGREED** to **HOMOLOGATE** the decision to advertise in the Summer in Scotland and ICT/Ross County Supplements with DC Thomson at a cost of £2,600 to be paid from the City Promotions Budget.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 4th November 2019 at 9.30am.

The meeting ended at 11.30 a.m.