

**HIGHLAND CULTURE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

Minutes of the Meeting of Highland Culture Strategic Partnership held in the Committee Room 1, Council Headquarters, Inverness on Thursday 2 May 2019 at 2.00pm.

**PRESENT:-**

Mr A Christie, Highland Council  
 Mr G Mackenzie, Highland Council  
 Mr D Yule, Highland Council  
 Mr I Murray, High Life Highland  
 Ms J Menabney, High Life Highland  
 Mr G Cameron, Creative Scotland  
 Ms S NicIlinnein, Bòrd na Gàidhlig  
 Ms M Christie, EventScotland/VisitScotland  
 Dr B Boag, University of the Highlands and Islands  
 Ms A Macrae, Highland Council

**Mr A Christie in the Chair**

<b><u>ITEM</u></b>	<b><u>SUBJECT/DECISION</u></b>	<b><u>ACTION</u></b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	
	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting of the Partnership.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
	Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs M Davidson and Mrs D Manson, Highland Council, Mr J Gibbs, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Mr G Cameron, Creative Scotland.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Minutes of previous meeting – 26 September 2018</b>	
	There had been circulated minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2018, the terms of which were <b>APPROVED</b> .	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
	There was circulated and <b>NOTED</b> a list of the actions arising from the previous meeting, all of which had been completed.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Working Group Set-up and Action to date</b>	
	There had been circulated Report by the Chief Executive, High Life Highland which detailed the progress and actions to date of the newly established Working Group.	
	In discussion, it was suggested that a key issue for the Working Group was the increasing impetus at a national level in relation to culture and the potential for funding to be made available. The Working Group should therefore focus on schemes, themes or concepts that would ready to take forward to access any funding which became available ahead of other areas. In this regard, it was	

important that any such proposals be reported to the Partnership for its approval in the first instance.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that a brief list of points discussed/actions arising from the Working Group would be circulated to the Partnership.

The Partnership **NOTED** the Working Groups establishment and its work to date, and **APPROVED** the following proposals;

- i. HCSB's title be replaced by 'Highland Culture Strategic Partnership';
- ii. representation on the HCSP and Working Group be as proposed in the table at 6.2 of the report.
- iii. to maintain current membership and consider extending at a future point, when the Partnership had matured; and
- iv. the four priorities for action and investment as set out in the report.

The Partnership further **AGREED** that a brief list of points discussed/actions arising from the meetings of the Working Group be circulated to the Partnership.

## 7. National Culture Strategy Development

There had been circulated Report by the Chief Executive, High Life Highland which set out the background, current status and the Highland context in relation to the development of a National Culture Strategy.

In discussion, the point was reiterated about the importance of the Partnership in terms of aligning with the National Strategy and accessing potential funding. If funding did not become available then it had a key role in ensuring the limited resources of partners were utilised in a common direction.

Thereafter, the Partnership:-

- i. **NOTED** progress on the National Culture Strategy; and
- ii. **AGREED** to remit the development of a process for the refresh of local plans, to align with the National Strategy, to the Working Group and ask it to report back to the next meeting.

## 8. Take Pride, Take Part Investment Fund Progress

There had been circulated Report by the Chief Executive, High Life Highland which informed partners about the current position of and outputs from the Take Pride, Take Part Investment Fund, established by HCSP's predecessor, the Highland Culture Strategic Board. Proposals had to be for strategic interventions that would have lasting legacy outcomes and be of a breadth and scale to bring about strategic change. Of eleven outline proposals initially submitted to the Fund investment was awarded to:-

- Highland Print Studio: 'Throw Up 20.18' (Shinty and the Visual Arts) - £61,950
- Aros (Isle of Skye) Ltd: 'Tha Seo Math Dhuibh- Good for You' (Arts, health and wellbeing in Skye) - £90,693

The Fund's unspent allocation of £147,357 remains available for the implementation of the Highland Place Partnership Plan, the action plan subsequently developed to deliver the objectives of Highland Culture Take Pride, Take Part strategy.

Detailed presentations were then provided to the Partnership by Ms A McMenemyr,

Highland Print Studio, and by J Menabney on behalf of Aros on the initiatives outcomes and their anticipated legacy.

Following a number of questions, the Partnership welcomed the presentations and in particular on hearing how the awards from the Fund had facilitated the activities, interactions and awareness raising outlined. The benefits of the projects in terms of changing attitudes to art and also exposing people to creative thinking and the value of this to the wider community was also highlighted. In summary, it had been demonstrated that the projects had been inclusive and had drawn people into arts and activities and that the Partnership's investment had added value to people's lives.

Thereafter, the Chief Executive, High Life Highland advised that the Working Group had early discussions in relation to the unspent allocation of £147,357 and emerging ideas were around the following themes:-

- continued development of a communication structure and supported regional network
- creation of a database of key cultural organisations and a platform to present that
- capture of social and economic value of cultural activity in Highland

The Working Group would be asked to take this forward and to bring firmer proposals back to the Partnership or for approval to be sought electronically if a more urgent turnaround was required,

The Partnership **NOTED**:-

- i. **NOTED** the 'Take Pride, Take Part Investment Fund' progress; and
- ii. **AGREED** that it be remitted to the Working Group to bring forward proposals for the unspent allocation of the Fund for approval by the Partnership.

## 9. Current Agency Contributions

A verbal update by partners on key developments/and/or investments since the last meeting was provided as follows:-

### High Life Highland

Mr I Murray advised that this would be his last meeting prior to his retirement as Chief Executive.

The Chair on behalf of the Partnership thanked Mr Murray for his contribution and hard work during his time with the Council and High Life Highland, and wished him well in his retirement.

### UHI

Funding had been secured from the European Structural and Investment Fund towards employment engagement officers, one of which would be in the creative industries and dedicated to working with that sector. There had been significant investment in and progress with the Centre for Rural Creativity in Shetland which supported research and knowledge exchange in the creative industries in remote and rural areas across its area. Approval had recently been given for a Masters level course in the creative industries field. There was considerable activity and a range projects ongoing and the UHI had regular contact and meetings with High Life Highland.

## VisitScotland

The organisation had led on the Programme for Young People and there had been significant activity in the Highlands with the Scottish Youth Poetry Slam and the National Theatre of Scotland Futureproof project. For the first time an events programme had been co-designed with young people and a report on the learning from this project would be circulated to partners. Support had also been provided for the SEALL Festival of Small Halls as part of Scotland's Winter Festival/ St Andrews Day Programme.

Going forward there was a Clan events funding programme which would support events and gatherings in the Highlands. Other events being supported in the area included the Nairn Arts and Book Festival and a range of sporting events.

Finally the Year of Coast and Waters 2010 was up and running and the funding programme had been open since November 2018. **The next round for funding applications closed on 7 June 2019.**

## Bòrd na Gàidhlig

The Deputy First Minister had met with those authorities with Gaelic Language Plans including the Highland Council and arising from that a workstream on economy and place had emerged, focused the Western Isles. The intention was to create models for working in other areas in terms of considering the assets of a place and how the benefits of these could be maximised.

Work had been undertaken with Skills Development Scotland on labour market intelligence for the Gaelic economy, including the potential for growth in the creative industries. The organisation also had a number of funding schemes one of which was being run in conjunction with its Irish counterpart, Foras na Gaeilge, and there had been a number of transnational projects in the Highland around sport and the arts.

In terms of organisations which BnG funded, Comunn na Gàidhlig worked with secondary school pupils and was about encouraging extra-curricular activities where Gaelic was being used. Theatre Gu Leor based in Glasgow but with an emphasis on touring had been funded for the first time, and it was envisaged that a number of performances would be presented in Highland. Work had also commenced on developing the Columba Year in 2021.

## Highland Council

Since the last meeting the Council had set its budget and had protected as best it could in challenging times its investment in arts groups and organisations such as High Life Highland, while recognising there had been a disproportionate level of cut in relation to other areas. An assurance was provided that the Council continued to be committed to delivering culture in the Highlands in partnership.

The meeting closed at 3.00pm.