

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held remotely on Thursday 18 February 2021 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Mr R Balfour	Mr A Graham
Mr B Boyd	Mr J Gray
Mr I Brown	Mr A Jarvie
Mrs C Caddick	Mrs I MacKenzie
Miss J Campbell	Mr D Macpherson
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair	Mr R MacWilliam
Mrs H Carmichael	Mrs T Robertson
Mr A Christie	Ms E Roddick
Mrs M Davidson	Mr G Ross
Mr K Gowans	Mr C Smith

Officials in Attendance:

Mr A Gunn, Executive Chief Officer Transformation and Economy
Ms L Denovan, Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance
Mr C Howell, Head of Infrastructure
Mr E Foster, Head of Corporate Finance and Commercialism
Ms A Clark, Head of Policy
Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr C Baxter, Planner
Mr N Young, Senior Engineer
Mr S Manning, Principal Traffic Officer
Mr M MacDonald, Corporate Improvement Project Manager
Mr J Mitchell, Principal Housing Officer
Mr J Kelman, Principal Project Manager
Mr K Forbes, Property Manager (Estates Management)
Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager
Ms A Macrae, Committee Administrator
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator

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. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms E Knox and Mrs B McAllister.

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

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

Item 4: Mrs I Mackenzie (non-financial)

Item 5: Miss J Campbell (non-financial)

Item 7b: Miss J Campbell and Mr A Jarvie (both non-financial)

Item 7c: Mrs H Carmichael (non-financial)

3. **New Years Honours** **Urraman na Bliadhna Ùire**

Members were advised that Paula Morag Lloyd had been recognised in the New Year's Honours List for services to the Vulnerable in Inverness during the Covid-19 Response. The Provost advised that a letter of congratulations had been sent to Ms Lloyd.

4. **Spaces for People – Updates and Next Steps** **Àiteachan do Dhaoine – Fios às Ùr**

Declaration of Interest – Mrs I Mackenzie declared a non-financial interest in this item on the grounds a family member had set up a petition in relation to this item but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/2/21 dated 3 February 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, Members raised a number of issues including the following main points:-

- it was suggested the spaces for people interventions had resulted in increased congestion in the City centre over the festive period;
- it appeared from the report, that as a percentage of space users the number of pedestrian and cyclists had decreased and there had been a slight increase in the number of road users;
- the need to acknowledge that at present some interventions to aid social distance were required, but also to recognise the significant public upset at the scheme overall;
- concern that to date there had been a lack of meaningful consultation with Members and the public, this having been conducted via the Council's online portal which was not accessible to all;
- the need to support and engage with businesses in the City centre and not implement measures which may reduce their footfall;
- in recognising the need to shift the balance of travel, a balanced stakeholder group of interests be established to produce an inclusive active travel masterplan taking into account the needs of all;
- the statistics around the public's behaviour as outlined in the report reflected the fact that most people were respecting the Government's advice to stay at home;

- the current measures on Academy Street were unsightly and it was important these be replaced with more aesthetic and greener interventions going forward;
- officers had confirmed permanent measures would be unlike the current temporary interventions and would be a product of consultation and the merits of the design options would be discussed further by the Committee;
- the need to recognise there were many people who lived outwith the City that relied on their cars or public transport to travel to work;
- careful consideration be given to the alternative design options for the Castle Street/Castle Road area on the basis the current arrangements were not adequate in terms of road safety;
- in the context of the Climate emergency, the proposed interventions would help reduce air pollution and ensure a cleaner City centre environment, noting that Academy Street had been assessed to be one of the most polluted streets in Scotland;
- the spaces for people measures had already delivered a number of excellent schemes with positive benefits and feedback being received and officers be commended for their work in this regard;
- confirmation was sought and provided that a traffic assessment was being undertaken in respect of Kingsmills Road, where it was suggested a significant increase in traffic had been observed. The wider impacts of the interventions were also being analysed and monitored on an ongoing basis;
- the need to develop and consult on proposals for a comprehensive transport strategy in the City, including better park and ride facilities and public transport taking into account the impacts on climate change and public health, potentially in conjunction with the Inverness Community Partnership;
- officers had outlined the full consultation that was to be undertaken in relation to any permanent measures and the need to reinforce the fact the majority of people supported rather than opposed the proposals;
- Members should have the courage to centre spaces around people and not vehicles and design an accessible City centre that would attract people to live, work and visit and of which future generations could be proud;
- the need to take a more overarching approach and inject more urgency in developing an active travel strategy for the City, including undertaking a realistic appraisal of the financial implications and how this strategy would be funded;
- the recommendations in the report be strengthened to provide for wider consultation on the proposals;
- the potential for the City Area Recovery Group , at which there had been positive discussions in terms of supporting the City centre, to move this forward by taking ownership and project managing an active travel plan for the City.

Following further discussion, the Provost seconded by Mrs T Robertson, **moved** approval of the recommendations in the report subject to recommendations (v) and (vi) being amended and to an additional condition as follows:-

- v. agree for officers to develop design options for a permanent street change for Academy Street for consideration at a future committee *with the proviso that the design development process includes consultation with representatives of the City business and residential communities to include representatives from Disability Access Groups*; and
- vi. agree for officers to develop design options for a permanent street change around Inverness Castle for consideration at a future committee *subject to consultation as in recommendation v, above.*

Additional Condition

Agree (a) to the development of proposals for a comprehensive transport strategy in the City taking into account the likely impact of Climate change and pollution on public health and (b) that effective pro-active public engagement be introduced in parallel with the strategic study, potentially in conjunction with the Inverness Community Partnership.

As a **first amendment**, Mr A Jarvie, seconded by Mr C Smith, moved that the Committee:-

- i. Acknowledge the need at present for some interventions to aid social distance, but also the significant public upset at the scheme overall;
- ii. Where these measures are not needed for the purpose of social distancing, these will be removed and those measure still required in the short term retained – subject to continual review and adaption where needed. At the appropriate time and social distancing is neither required or advised, all spaces for people measures to be reversed and returned to the pre-covid layout; and
- iii. In recognising the need to shift the balance of travel, agrees to establish a balanced stakeholder group of business representatives and owners, walking, cycling, disability and motorist groups, local residents, Community Councils and Councillors with the aim of producing an active travel masterplan with route specifics, enabling future measures to be rolled out on an informed manner taking into account the needs of all.

As a **second amendment**, Mr R MacWilliam seconded by Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, moved the following addition to the recommendations in the report:-

The Highland Council will consult Highland citizens, public bodies and community groups on an agreed strategy which is grounded in up-to-date research and accessible design principles with intention to accelerate modal shift from vehicles to cycling and walking across Inverness city centre. Officers are asked to report back on progress to the next meeting of the Committee with a detailed position from the council administration as to how this strategy will be funded.

On a vote being taken between the **first amendment** and the **second amendment**, the **first amendment** received 4 votes and the **second amendment** received 11 votes, with 5 abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the First Amendment:

Mr R Balfour, Mr A Jarvie, Mrs I Mackenzie, Mr C Smith.

For the Second Amendment:

Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr A Christie, Mrs M Davidson, Mr K Gowans, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mr D Macpherson, Mr R MacWilliam, Ms E Roddick.

Abstentions:

Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mrs T Robertson, Mr G Ross.

On a subsequent vote being taken between the **motion** and the **second amendment**, the **motion** received 11 votes and the **second amendment** received 6 votes, with 3 abstentions. The **motion** was therefore **carried**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr R Balfour, Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mr D Macpherson, Mrs T Robertson, Mr G Ross.

For the Second Amendment:

Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr K Gowans, Mr R MacWilliam, Ms E Roddick.

Abstentions:

Mr A Jarvie, Mrs I Mackenzie, Mr C Smith.

Decision

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to consider the progress made to implement the Spaces for People Highland project to support physical distancing during the pandemic;
- ii. **NOTED** the outcome of monitoring of interventions;
- iii. **NOTED** that work was progressing on schemes for Riverside Way & Millburn Road through the Inverness City Active Travel Network project;
- iv. **AGREED** to retain the four key interventions in Inverness whilst Government recommendations for physical distancing remained in place, including extending Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders under Coronavirus legislation, if required;
- v. **AGREED** (a) to the development of proposals for a comprehensive transport strategy in the City taking into account the likely impact of Climate change and pollution on public health and (b) that effective proactive public engagement be introduced in parallel with the strategic study, potentially in conjunction with the Inverness Community Partnership;
- vi. **AGREED** for officers to develop design options for a permanent street change for Academy Street for consideration at a future committee with the proviso that the design development process includes consultation

- with representatives of the City business and residential communities to include representatives from Disability Access Groups; and
- vii. **AGREED** for officers to develop design options for a permanent street change around Inverness Castle for consideration at a future committee subject to consultation as in recommendation vi, above.

5. Events and Festivals Tachartasan agus Fèisean

Declaration of Interest – Miss J Campbell declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of Eden Court Highlands but, as a Council appointee and in terms of the specific exclusion in Section 5.18 of the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/3/21 dated 28 January 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer, Transformation.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the proposals outlined in the report represented an exciting and unique opportunity to work in collaboration with High Life Highland and Eden Court to bring high quality events and festivals to Inverness;
- the need to have a proposed programme of events and costings prior to agreeing a budget and whether it was intended to fill the vacant Events Manager post going forward. It was confirmed that a further report on the way forward and the operating model to inform resource requirements would be brought to the Committee in May 2021;
- the need to consider the types of offerings going forward and the timing of events over the year;
- the importance of there being no conflict of interest in collaborating with preferred partners when inviting tenders for events in terms of the Council’s contract standing orders;
- the potential to include the University of the Highlands and Islands, Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC, Royal National Mòd and the Blas Festival in the collaborative partnership framework arrangement going forward;
- a successful and holistic events and festivals programme had been delivered since 2009 and the opportunity for the vision to be further refreshed on the basis it replicated much of what was already in place;
- concern at the proposal to charge for some events on the basis it was important they remained accessible to all. It was confirmed that any proposals to charge for an event would be subject to equality and socio-economic impact assessments;
- it was hoped that collaboration with partners would enhance the core programme of events, provide an opportunity to share costs and attract additional sources of funding;
- in agreeing to preserve the current events and festivals budget, any under-spend on the budget should be retained for the following year but not as an additional sum to budget agreed for the following year;
- while entry to events should continue to be free, there was the opportunity to introduce charging for enhanced viewing areas or facilities

and the potential to harness other opportunities for the Council to generate income from its events;

- the potential for more digital online events be explored on the basis this would help support equalities and may encourage some people to attend events in person in future. Digital events also had the potential to significantly increase exposure and this in turn may attract sponsorship for events;
- events and festivals was key to the economic recovery of the City and in relation to wellbeing, and it was hoped that if Covid guidelines allowed a larger event could be organised towards the end of the year; and
- meeting invites to the Events and Festivals Working Group and the Committee's other Sub Committees/Working Groups be circulated to all Committee Members to allow for more participation and scrutiny.

Thereafter, the Committee: -

- i. **AGREED** the vision, values and objectives detailed in Appendix 1;
- ii. **AGREED** to preserve the current events & festivals budget in the sum of £0.303m to support the development of a refreshed events and festivals programme;
- iii. **AGREED** that any under-spend on the budget be retained for the following year noting that this sum would not be added to the budget agreed for the following year;
- iv. **NOTED** that the governance arrangements with scrutiny through the Events and Festivals Working Group, with annual reports to CIAC will continue;
- v. **NOTED** the next steps as detailed in section 7.1 of this report and that a subsequent paper will be presented at the May 2021 CIAC; and
- vi. **AGREED** that all Committee Members receive meeting invites to the Committee's Sub Committees/Working Groups.

6. Housing Revenue Account: Garage Rents 2021/22 Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Taigheadais: Màil Gharaidsean 2020/21

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/4/21 dated 3 February 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer, Housing and Property.

The Committee **AGREED** that a 2% rent increase be applied to Inverness Garages and Garage Sites.

7. Inverness Common Good Fund Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis

a) 2019/20 Final Position, Financial Monitoring and Capital Projects Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail agus Pròiseactan Calpa

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/5/21 dated 3 February 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer, Resources and Finance.

In introducing the report, the Inverness City Area Manager provided an update in respect of winter fuel payments, confirming that a total of £127,968 had been paid out to date.

Inverness Town House - The Principal Project Manager provided an update on the two current major capital projects, namely, the Town House and the Victorian Market. It was explained that the Town House had been scheduled for completion in late December/early January, but delays had been experienced due to Covid and the revised completion date was the end of March 2021. The main issue was the external works and the fact that contractors were having to limit what they could do, or use mechanical means, to maintain social distancing. In addition, there had been some issues with the delivery of materials, often sourced from Europe. On a positive note, the fact that there were no staff working in the building at present had allowed progress to be made on the internal works. It was hoped that the revised completion date was achievable, but progress was being monitored week by week. There was no change to the cost frame at present, but an extension of time claim had been received and was currently being evaluated. The Inverness City Area Manager would be notified of any developments as soon as possible and a further update would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

Victorian Market - In relation to the Victorian Market, work had commenced on site in January, beginning with the asbestos removal works. It had originally been intended to have site accommodation on Academy Street. However, due to the Spaces for People interventions and the installation of fibreoptic cables on Academy Street it had been necessary to rethink, and it had been agreed that the main contractor would hire a vacant shop unit on Union Street for the duration of the contract. In addition, space for a skip would be allocated in Union Street. It was hoped that the associated costs would be covered by the contingency element of the contract, but he would report back to a future meeting of the Committee if that was not the case. It was a one-year contract so the end of the contract period was (unforeseen circumstances permitting) January 2022 but the contractor was currently scheduled to finish in December 2021 and Covid-related issues had been allowed for.

At this stage, the Chair of the City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Group addressed the Committee, explaining that the Recovery Group had been formed in June 2020 and had met on ten occasions since. It had examined options to help residents and businesses recover from the effects of the Covid pandemic, worked through a variety of issues and established a system of checks to ensure proper governance of any proposed actions prior to their implementation.

To fully understand the implications of any actions the Committee might wish to implement to assist Council or Common Good business tenants it was first necessary to carry out a full financial, economic and equalities assessment. When that had been completed, it was suggested that there would be an additional meeting of the Committee to fully consider the subsequent recommended actions prior to their implementation.

One of the many issues on the agenda had been the viability of businesses in the centre of Inverness, including Council and Common Good business tenants. Businesses on a global basis had been impacted by Covid and various levels and lengths of lockdown restrictions. The impact on businesses had varied considerably: generally, but not always, the impact had been negative. The UK and Scottish Governments had made various business support grants available to support businesses impacted by Covid and these

had been open to businesses across Highland, including city centre businesses, to apply for. Although these grants had been administered by Council staff, they had been widely available to businesses other than Council business tenants.

Members of the Recovery Group had asked for advice from Council officials with knowledge, expertise and responsibility as to how the Group could further assist businesses to recover. The advice given was that the Council had responsibilities with regards to both Council and Common Good business tenants. In the case of supporting businesses during Covid, the Council had a responsibility to clearly establish the level of need, not only of those that had raised the issue but of others to whom the Council had a responsibility. It would be irresponsible to consider any group, such as the Victorian Market traders, in isolation and as a reaction to a campaign. There was a Victorian Market Stakeholders Group, chaired by Councillor Isabelle MacKenzie, which met with traders on a regular basis. The Common Good Fund had also financed the appointment of the Victorian Market Manager, Joe Murray, who supported marketing, development, and wider communications.

The responsibilities of Members and officials of the Council had to be considered in the wider context of their duty of care and their fiduciary duties regarding Council and Common Good resources. One of the key responsibilities of Members and officials was that they must always act responsibly, consistently and respectfully to all. As always, in making decisions, the question of balancing the various competing issues should be considered in depth. It was critical that the reasoning behind any actions was transparent, justifiable and capable of withstanding scrutiny. Presently, there was a complex array of financial support available with further announcements regarding additional business grants focussing on non-domestic rates having been made as recently as Tuesday of the current week.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- thanks, were expressed to the officers who prepared the reports and those behind the scenes who did so much work in relation to the Common Good Fund, as well as to the Members of the Common Good Fund Sub-Committee for their work throughout the year;
- information was sought, and provided, on the year-to-date underspends on the Victorian Market Maintenance and Operations budgets and how the remainder of the budgets would be spent by the end of the financial year;
- in relation to rental income, the Property Manager having confirmed that most tenants had continued to pay their rent, it was suggested this was because they had no option;
- concern was expressed that the full financial impact of Covid might well not be felt until the following year;
- it was queried what flexibility had been offered to tenants in terms of rent relief;
- relying on national schemes was not sufficient. Food and drink businesses, for example, had so far not been eligible for grants because they had not been required to close, yet some had lost a significant proportion of their business due to hotels and pubs being closed. Whilst the Economy and Infrastructure Committee had, at its most recent

meeting, approved a discretionary grants scheme, a grant of £2k was helpful to a small business but not to a larger employer;

- the proposed impact assessment was welcomed. However, this was not a laborious process and it was hoped that the additional meeting of the Committee would take place in the next few weeks and that there would be a full overview of the operations of the Common Good Fund estate. In addition, it would be helpful to have comments or representations from a range of tenants;
- offering rent relief was not just for social good, it was within the remit of fiduciary duty, and it was in the best interests of the Common Good Fund to do everything possible to retain tenants and protect revenue;
- the statement by the Chair of the City and Area of Inverness Recovery Group was encouraging. However, it was suggested that there were some inaccuracies in terms of the support that the Committee could afford to its commercial tenants. The small businesses in question created the vibrancy that was going to be necessary going forward, and it was asked that Members be open-minded;
- it was important that the Victorian Market project was completed as soon as possible given the effect any delays would have on trading, and the assurance that the project was currently projected to be completed on budget was welcomed. It having been queried when the Committee would next have an opportunity to scrutinise the project to ensure that it was still on track, the Principal Project Manager explained that a status report was presented to every meeting of the Committee and if there were any issues to report he would attend and update Members directly;
- a request having been made for a meeting with the Victorian Market traders, the Chair reiterated that it would not be appropriate to consider any group in isolation and that an additional meeting of the Committee would take place following completion of the necessary impact assessment;
- on the point being raised, it was confirmed that the valuation error which had been reported to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee did not affect Common Good Fund property valuations;
- in response to a question regarding the underspend on the Compensation Payments – Victorian Market budget, it was explained that when the budget had been set it had been unclear how much compensation would be payable to each tenant as it depended when they left and whether they intended to return to the Market. It was added that the purpose of the budget was specifically to compensate tenants who had had their tenancies terminated as a result of the refurbishment contract. The Inverness City Area Manager undertook to provide a detailed breakdown of compensation payments to all Members of the Committee;
- a date for the additional meeting of the Committee having been requested, the Chair confirmed that it would take place as soon as the results of the impact assessment, which was now underway, were available and noting that it was essential that the Committee be fully informed before taking a decision; and
- it was proposed that it be added to the recommendations that the grants offered to Victorian Market tenants be proportionately increased based on the delays to the refurbishment works as a result of Covid. However, the Inverness City Area Manager advised that it would not be appropriate to make such a decision until the financial implications had been assessed, and it was suggested that the proposal be investigated and revisited at the

additional meeting of the Committee. The Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance assured Members that officers would carry out a full and thorough investigation of the financial implications as quickly as possible. It was added that additional information was coming in daily from government and it was important to ensure best value for any money the Committee expended. The Chair did not accept the proposed additional recommendation.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the Inverness Common Good Fund final monitoring report for 2019/20 and balance sheet as at 31st March 2020;
- ii. **NOTED** the financial monitoring report to 31 December 2020; and that overall expenditure was within agreed budgets;
- iii. scrutinised and **NOTED** the current status of capital projects;
- iv. **NOTED** that an additional (Special) meeting of the City of Inverness Area Committee would take place following completion of a comprehensive financial, economic and equalities assessment to inform any decisions the Committee might wish to take to assist Common Good business tenants;
- v. **AGREED** that a breakdown of compensation payments in respect of the Victorian Market be circulated to all Members of the Committee; and
- vi. **AGREED** that the proposal that the grants offered to Victorian Market tenants be proportionately increased based on the delays to the refurbishment works as a result of Covid be revisited at the additional meeting of the Committee following completion of the necessary financial assessments.

Mr A Jarvie requested that his dissent be recorded.

b) Grant and Capital Projects Proiseactan Tabhartais agus Calpa

Declarations of Interest: Miss J Campbell and Mr A Jarvie declared non-financial interests in this item as a Member of the Inverness Community Safety Partnership and a Director of High Life Highland respectively but, as Council appointees and in terms of the specific exclusion in Section 5.18 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, confirmed that they would remain and take part in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/6/21 dated 26 January 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer, Resources and Finance. A copy of supporting documentation had also been circulated as Booklet A.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- in relation to the Inverness Gull Project, gulls remained an issue and, it having been queried what the proposed funding covered and whether awarding a greater amount would lead to a better result, it was suggested that a report on the project be presented to the next meeting of the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee. Councillor Smith requested that he also be kept informed;
- with regard to the application by Visit Inverness Loch Ness, it was confirmed that, whilst the amount applied for was £30,000 per annum, the

Committee was not being asked to commit any funding beyond the first year. It was further confirmed that the Inverness Common Good Fund was being asked to provide 50% of the total funding required, with Visit Inverness Loch Ness and Inverness BID each providing 25%;

- in relation to the application by Inverness Botanic Gardens/High Life Highland, it was highlighted that Councillor Macpherson was no longer a Director of High Life Highland;
- Velocity Café and Bicycle Workshop did tremendous work and it was hoped that they could be accommodated. It was confirmed that the applications would come back to the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee for consideration as soon as the additional information requested to ensure there was no duplication across the applications had been received.

Thereafter, the Committee determined the current grant applications as follows:-

- 1) Velocity Café and Bicycle Workshop Ltd – Bespoked Project – **AGREED** to defer for submission of further information;
- 2) Velocity Café and Bicycle Workshop Ltd – Bike-it/Scoot-it Project – **AGREED** to defer for submission of further information;
- 3) Inverness Botanic Gardens/High Life Highland – **APPROVED** a grant of £16,127 towards Apples for All at Bught Apple Park;
- 4) Visit Inverness Loch Ness – **APPROVED** a grant of £30,000 from the Partnership Working Budget towards Inverness City Recovery Marketing;

and **APPROVED** the following applications submitted by Inverness BID:-

- 1) The City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays 2021 - £61,100
- 2) Operation Respect Easter/Summer/Autumn 2021 – £9,113
- 3) Inverness Gull Project - £11,200
- 4) Inverness Community Safety Partnership - £9,700

It was further **AGREED** that a report on the Inverness Gull Project be presented to the next meeting of the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee, and that information also be provided to Councillor Smith in that regard.

c) ICGF Budget Setting for 2021/22 and Capital Programme Buidseat ICGF – 2021/22

Declaration of Interest: Mrs H Carmichael declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of Inverness BID and Inverness Loch Ness BID but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/7/21 dated 2 February 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer, Resources and Finance and Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- information was sought, and provided, on how much of the projected deficit was in addition to what it would otherwise have been and the impact of liquidating assets to fund it, particularly whether a higher percentage of the portfolio would have to be liquidated now than pre-Covid to achieve the same revenue;
- whilst it was appreciated that the investment strategy was delegated to the Pensions Committee, it would be helpful to see more detail on how the Common Good Fund was performing and it was suggested that there should be an item on the next Committee agenda looking at the investment strategy and the overall expenditure of the Fund in future years. The interest had previously been generous but as the total volume of assets had decreased so had the interest and it was necessary to change from a passive strategy to a longer-term income focussed strategy to rebuild the Fund's reserves. The Chair responded that the reason for a passive strategy was to ensure a safe return. However, other Members commented that, coming out of a recession, remaining passive was a missed opportunity;
- information on the Fund's investments would be valuable when considering what could be done to support business tenants; and
- an update was sought on the review of the city's CCTV system and it was queried whether the budget allocation of £90,000 needed to be increased to provide a fit for purpose system that would protect citizens and stakeholders in the city centre. The Inverness City Area Manager explained that officers were working closely with Police Scotland and it was intended to report to the next meeting of the Community Safety Partnership and, in due course, the City Committee. He undertook to ensure Councillor Macpherson received an invitation to the Community Safety Partnership and confirmed that there was no requirement to increase the budget allocation at this stage.

In responding to the points raised, the Head of Corporate Finance and Commercialism confirmed that further information on the make-up of the Common Good Fund's assets, how the Fund was performing, and potential investment approaches could be included in future monitoring reports. In relation to potentially changing the investment strategy, it was explained that Members first needed to decide what they wanted the Fund's long-term investment outcomes to be. Investment could then be tailored accordingly.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED**:-

- i. the Common Good Fund budget for 2021/22 as detailed within the report and appendices; and
- ii. that further information on the make-up of the Common Good Fund's assets, how the Fund was performing, and potential investment approaches be included in future monitoring reports.

8. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

There had been circulated various Minutes for noting or approval as appropriate.

It was questioned how Members who did not sit on a particular Sub-Committee/Working Group could carry out their scrutiny role when they were not invited to the meetings and the discussions took place in private, the Minutes of the Inverness City Arts Working Group and the discussions regarding the My Ness Project being cited as an example. Discussion ensued, during which it was reiterated that any Member could attend any Sub-Committee/Working Group as an observer and going forward, as agreed under item 5, all Members of the Committee would receive the electronic invites to the Committee's Sub-Committees/Working Groups so they could choose whether or not they wished to attend.

The Committee otherwise:-

- i. **NOTED** the Minutes of the City of Inverness Area Committee held on 19 November 2020 and 18 January 2021 (Special);
- ii. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Inverness City Arts Working Group held on 10 December 2020;
- iii. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee held on 27 November 2020 and 25 January 2021;
- iv. **NOTED** the Minutes of the Victorian Market Stakeholders Group held on 10 November 2020, 8 December 2020 and 12 January 2021; and
- v. **NOTED** the Minutes of the City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub-Group held on 9 December 2020 and 21 January 2021.

The meeting ended at 3.35 pm.

The Highland Council

Minutes of **Special Meeting** of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held remotely on **Thursday, 22 April 2021** at 10.00am.

Present:

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

Officials in Attendance:

Mr A Gunn, Executive Chief Officer Transformation and Economy
Ms L Denovan, Executive Chief Officer Resources and Finance
Mr S Fraser, Head of Corporate Governance
Ms A Clark, Head of Policy
Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr K Forbes, Property Manager (Estates Management)
Mr P Nevin, Legal Manager
Miss J MacLennan, Democratic Services Manager
Ms M Zavarella, Committee Officer

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. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr A Christie, Mr K Gowans and Mr R MacWilliam.

2. Declaration of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

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

Item 5: Mr A Jarvie (Non-Financial)

3. Membership of the Committee Ballarachd Chomataidhean

It was **NOTED** that, following the By-Election held on 11 March 2021, Mr David Fraser (Independent) had been elected as a Member of Ward 12 (Aird and Loch Ness).

In this regard, Mr Fraser was welcomed accordingly.

4. Exclusion of the Public As-dunadh a' Phobail

Mrs H Carmichael, seconded by Mr J Gray, **MOVED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, and following legal advice which had been received, the public should be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr A Jarvie, seconded by Mr C Smith, moved that discussion should be undertaken on the general principles of the report and that the meeting should only move into private as and when necessary thereafter.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 13 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 2 votes, with 4 abstentions, and the **MOTION** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr R Balfour, Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mrs M Davidson, Mr D Fraser, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs T Robertson and Mr G Ross.

For the Amendment:

Mr A Jarvie and Mr C Smith.

Abstentions:

Ms E Knox, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr D Macpherson and Ms E Roddick.

5. Inverness Common Good Fund – Tenancies (Covid-19 Implications) – Models for Financial Support Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis – Ath-sgrudadh air Taic do Luchd- gabhail

Declaration of Interest – Mr A Jarvie declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of High Life Highland but, having applied the test as outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude him from taking part in the discussion.

There had been circulated to Members only Joint Report No. CIA/8/2021 dated 8 April 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer (Resources and Finance), Executive Chief Officer (Infrastructure and Environment), Executive Chief Officer

(Communities and Place) and the (Executive Chief Officer) Performance and Governance.

Following discussion, and following a vote, the Committee **AGREED** the recommendations as detailed in the report.

The meeting ended at 11.10am.

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

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held **remotely** on Monday 8 March 2021 at 3pm.

Present:

Mr B Boyd

Mr I Brown

Mrs C Caddick

Miss J Campbell

Mrs H Carmichael

Mr A Graham

Mr A Jarvie

Mrs I Mackenzie

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

Ms F MacBain, Committee Administrator, Chief Executive's Service

Mr G Ross in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Ms E Roddick.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

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 it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

4. Requests for Financial Assistance 2020/21

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/04/21 dated 23 February 2021 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

Velocity Café and Bicycle Workshop Ltd (£9,999 sought)

Bespoked

DECLINED

Following discussion, Members voiced support for the project in principle but expressed concern that the requested funds were mainly to cover staff salaries, and there was insufficient detail on the individual project and its specific wider benefits to the residents of Inverness.

The Sub- Committee:-

- a. **DECLINED** the application detailed in the attached Appendices 2 and 3;
and
- b. **NOTED** that for this meeting an allocation of £17,752 was available and that if not allocated would be returned to the Common Good Fund

5. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 26th April 2021 at 9.30am via Microsoft Teams.

The meeting ended at 3.50pm

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

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held **remotely** on Monday 26 April 2021 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Mr B Boyd

Mr I Brown

Mrs C Caddick

Miss J Campbell

Mrs H Carmichael

Mr A Graham

Mrs I Mackenzie

Mrs E McAllister

Mr G Ross

Miss E Roddick

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager

Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, City Manager's Office

Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Performance & Governance Service

Mr G Ross in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

Item 5 , Booklet B – Mrs H Carmichael (non-financial)

Item 5, Booklet C – Miss J Campbell (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 Paragraph 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

4. Highland Coastal Communities Fund – Assessment of Expressions of Interest

There was circulated Report No. GSC/05/21 dated 8 April 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer for Infrastructure and Environment.

The Sub-Committee was invited to:-

- a. consider the expressions of interest submitted and the comments of Members from the wards within which these are located; and
- b. agree feedback to applicants including whether the applicant should be invited to develop a full application proposal for the project in question;

whether the level of funding being sought is appropriate; any specific points that Members would wish to see addressed as part of the application.

Following consideration of the expressions of interests, the Committee were supportive of the following expressions of interest being submitted to the City of Inverness Area Committee for consideration:- The Highland Council – Merkinch Local Nature Reserve – Boardwalk & Active Travel Route and Aird Community Trust – Lentrán-Inchmore Path.

Further, the Committee were supportive of the Clachworks CIC, Tool Library expression of interest being considered for Ward Discretionary funding.

5. Requests for Financial Assistance 2021/21

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/06/21 dated 15 April 2021 by the Inverness City Area Manager and, separately, a copy of the applications and any supporting documentation.

In relation to funding already committed, it was highlighted that The Ledge Climbing Walls & Adventure Sports Training project had not received planning permission. The Applicants was considering a new application to the Planning Committee.

Booklet A – Applications under £5,000

Chamber Music Tours Scotland (£3,000 sought)
Inverness Piano Recitals 2021/22

It was **AGREED** to delegate to the City of Inverness Area Manager in consultation with the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub Committee to approve this application up to a maximum of £3,000 on the basis that the Applicant could satisfy that the event could be arranged on a cost effective basis. The City Area Manager would also check what support may be available from other organisations for this event through contact with Eden Court in particular in respect of Live Streaming opportunities.

Rotary Club of Inverness Culloden (£800 sought)
Rotary Santa Sleigh

APPROVED £800

This had been a great event in the past and the Sub Committee were very supportive of the application.

Booklet B - Applications £5,001 - £10,000

Mrs H Carmichael declared a non-financial interest in the following application as she was a Director of Loch Ness BID but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that the interest did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion.

Highland Food and Drink Trail Ltd (£6,200 sought)

Highland Food and Drink Trail

The provision of electrical power points on Ness Walk Boulevard would be a good investment for the future and the Sub Committee were supportive of the application. It was noted that a waste management plan would be in place in terms of littering in the area.

The Sub Committee **AGREED** to support the application for £6,200 specifically towards the installation of power bollards with funds being transferred within the Council, subject to Wards 13 & 14 Members supporting additional applications from the Applicant on this project for Ward Discretionary funding.

Inverness High School (£6,987 sought)

S1 Outdoor Transition Project 2021

AGREED £6,000

The Sub Committee noted the benefits of this project to the residents of the Borough and were supportive of it.

The Clay Studio, Inverness (£8,432 sought)

Food for Thought

AGREED £8,432

The Sub Committee recognised the community benefits this application would bring to a deprived area of Inverness and were supportive of it.

Booklet C- Applications over £10,000

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:-

The Florians (£17,000 sought)

Health and Safety ventilation improvements to Theatre at Bught Drive **AGREED TO RECOMMEND £17,000, subject to the Inverness City Area Manager ensuring that the organisation had taken all reasonable steps to identify any other sources of funding that may be available to support this project.**

Inverness Rowing Club (£30,000 sought)

Inverness Rowing Club Development Project – Facilities Upgrade - **AGREED TO RECOMMEND £30,000**

Miss J Campbell declared a non-financial interest in the following item as she was a Board Member of Eden Court Highlands and took no part in the discussion on this application.

FLOW Photofest (£14,900 sought)

International Photography Competition **AGREED TO RECOMMEND £11,920**

The Display Boards to be used for project should be reusable and this would be checked with the Applicant.

Highland and Islands Blood Bikes (£30,000 sought)

Highland and Islands Blood Bikes Inverness Motorcycle Response **AGREED TO**

RECOMMEND that this application be DECLINED as the project was an NHS Highland responsibility.

High Life Highland (£45,000 sought)

Bellfield Park Upgrading **AGREED TO RECOMMEND that this application is DEFERRED pending the Applicant producing a Business Plan for Bellfield Park and options for Third Party funding.**

The Sub Committee were supportive in principle with investment in Bellfield Park but the applicant be asked to produce a business plan identifying the benefits of investment in this key Civic Asset, noting the obligations on the Council and the applicant.

Booklet D - Conference Applications

Monsterfest Rocks Limited (£9,500 sought)

Monsterfest 2021 **APPROVED £6,125**

The Sub- Committee:-

- a. **CONSIDERED** the applications listed in the attached Appendix 7 and detailed in the circulated applications;
- b. **APPROVED, DECLINED or DEFERRED** applications for up to and including £10,000, as indicated;
- c. **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee at its meeting on 27 May, 2021 for those applications for more than £10,000, as indicated; and
- d. **NOTED** that for this meeting an allocation of £100,000 was available for applications over £5,000.

6. Clachnacuddin Football Club

There had been circulated a Strategic update report submitted by Clachnacuddin Football Club.

The Sub Committee were supportive of the community work undertaken at Grant Street Park by the Club, particularly the very proactive engagement with young people. However, it was noted that no decision or support had been made in respect of the Club's development aspirations of Dalneigh pitches as this was a separate matter and required further work to be undertaken.

The Sub Committee **NOTED** the Strategic update report.

7. Inverness Gull Project

The Inverness City Area Manager gave a verbal update on the Inverness Gull Project 2021. It was highlighted that the joint management programme with Inverness BID was unable to operate last year but would recommence this year.

An independent survey of nesting birds in Longman and Carse areas of the City would commence on 27 April and on 4th May a survey of nesting birds on large buildings beyond the aforementioned areas would commence. Details were

provided of plans to remove eggs from nests from 65 properties in the Inverness BID area to deter Gulls from nesting at sites next to large centres of population. A further report on the impact of this year's project would be submitted to the next meeting.

In discussion, other areas in the City Centre that should be considered in the Gull programme were Morrisons Supermarket, Old Midmills College building and Crown Primary. There was also a need to communicate to the public to stop feeding gulls.

The Sub Committee **NOTED** that a formal report would be presented to the Sub-Committee Meeting scheduled to be held on 2nd August 2021.

8. Fraser Park Bowling Club

There was circulated Report No. GSC/07/21 dated 28 March 2021 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

The Sub-Committee: -

- a. **APPROVED** the proposal that the Inverness Common Good Fund is responsible for all maintenance costs associated with the Fraser Park Bowling Club for a period of 10 years; and
- b. **NOTED** that this proposal will be reviewed after a period of ten years.

9. Merkinch LNR Boardwalk

There was circulated update report on the Merkinch LNR Boardwalk.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the update on the Merkinch LNR Boardwalk and **AGREED to recommend £22.5k** of additional funding for this project to the City of Inverness Area Committee at it's meeting on 27 May 2021.

10. Bellfield Park Tennis Club

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to extend the time period of the grant awarded to the Bellfield Park Tennis Club.

11. High Street Painting

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to paint the benches, bins etc on the High Street at a cost of £3,500.

12. Evaluation Forms

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the Evaluation Forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects.

13. Civic Hospitality Requests

There was circulated Report No. GSC/08/21 dated 16 April 2021 by the Inverness City Area Manager which listed an application received for Civic Hospitality from the Inverness Common Good Fund.

In this connection there was circulated separately a copy of the application and any supporting documentation.

Highland Rugby Football Club (Cost to be confirmed)

Highland Rugby Football Club Centenary Celebration

APPROVED

The Sub-Committee:-

- a. **NOTED** the implications of Covid 19 Guidance which may act to restrict numbers in attendance or require the cancellation of events at short notice.
- b. **NOTED** that successful applicant will be responsible for their own costs in the event of an event being cancelled or restricted due to the application of Covid19 Guidance no matter when the event has been cancelled or subjected to restrictions.
- c. **CONSIDERED** the application listed in the attached Appendix 2 and detailed in Booklet E and agreed to delegate power to approve the application to the Inverness City Area Manager.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 2 August, 2021 at 9.30 am via Microsoft Teams.

The meeting ended at 11.50 am.

Victorian Market Stakeholders Group Meeting
Virtual Meeting by Microsoft Teams

Tuesday 13th April 2021 at 5.30pm

Present:; Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie (IM), Cllr Graham Ross (GR); Cllr Bet McAllister (BM); Cllr Andrew Jarvie (AJ); Cllr Duncan Macpherson (DM); David Haas (DH) Inverness City Area Manager – Highland Council; Jo Murray (JM), Victorian Market Manager; John Ewart (JE) The Milk Bar, Victorian Market; Willie Morrison (WM), William Morrison Jewellers, Market Arcade, Victorian Market; Mike Smith (MS), Inverness BID; Jackie Cuddy (JC) – Eastgate Centre; Hilary Tolmie (HT), Business Support – Highland Council

Apologies: Cllr Janet Campbell; Colin Craig - Oil and Vinegar; Pat Bloczynski - Aeternum

Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie in the Chair

No.	Item	ACTIONS	Action
	Welcome		
1.	Actions from Previous Minutes	The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.	
2.	Victorian Market Manager's Update	JM gave an update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since last meeting work has started on the refurbishment of the Fish Market and this is taking up a lot of JMs time • Some of the Traders have experienced some service issues since work started but these have all been resolved quickly. This was not unexpected. • Alternative Toilet provision is being looked at as extra provision will be required after 26 April when the Arcade reopens for business. • Trader meeting was held with JM and the Arcade traders which was very effective. Marketing of VM going forward was discussed and JM is progressing this and considering engaging an outside company. In the process of getting costing and making sure it is the correct fit for the market and within budget. • Trader meeting going forward will prove very effective and will include Queensgate going forward. • Reopening going smoothly with the barbers now open for business. There is a reasonable footfall pattern which is encouraging. • The public are now well versed in how to be covid compliant. • Businesses getting support from Environmental Health. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting ready for complete reopening on 26 April when all non-essential shops and cafes can reopen. • Covid Compliant officers visiting businesses and advising of Covid restrictions and regulations. They intend making regular visits. • JE asked about an updated timeline for the project as it was to be circulated after last traders meeting, but JM has not received it yet. • There are some delays, but the contractors are trying to get back on schedule. JM will circulate the new timeline when she receives it. • DH confirmed that a Union Jack was flying at half mast over the VM to mark the passing of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh and it was entirely appropriate for this meeting to take place. 	JM
3.	Market project update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JE wondered where JK was as he didn't attend last meeting DH confirmed he is on annual leave • Ask JK for an update that can be circulated to the group. • The site unit has now been set up in the old Cash Converter shop in Union Street and an area is cordoned off outside it for the skips. Bins etc. This is working well. • There is a site manager on site every day and JM is in regular communication with him. • A Clerk of Works monitors the project • Services are the biggest challenge at present. • 7 weeks of down takings have commenced. Between 7am - 9am and 5pm – 8pm large amounts of material are removed but during 9am -5pm only small amounts are removed to cause the least disruption. Two to three skips will be delivered to Union Street daily. • Cleaning will be extended to keep on top of the dust. • Noise will be monitored on a day to day basis. • JM on site every day from the 26th • All barriers under the clock will be removed by the 26th. 	JK
4.	Action Plan Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JM had circulated prior to the meeting the 2017 Action plan an Action Plan update as at April 2021 • Every item on the original Action Plan has now been addressed but not all progressed. • The design of the shopfronts in the Arcade has been designed and costed but due the cost has been deferred until a later date • Although the stonework was repaired on the Academy Street Entrance the glass entrance has not been progressed. • These plans are still up to date but the costings may need to be revised in the future. • Only thing not taken forward as yet is the Water Feature • As the development of the Market Hall/Fish Hall is now progressing it is felt now is the time to review the Action Plan and the Stakeholder Group. • A lot has been achieved in the last few years and it's time now for progression and change. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BM commented that the Church Street Entrance has the lowest footfall of all the entrances and how could it be made more visible and that might be the place to put a water feature.• JE felt the Church Street has the lowest footfall is because Church Street is more an evening street and the Union Street and Queensgate Entrances are used as shortcuts so that affects footfall figures.• JE commented that although the shopfront and Academy Street aspects of the Action Plan had not been realised, he hoped they would come to fruition sometime in the future and would not be forgotten.• DH advised that all projects need to be supported by a strong business case in order to move forward.• JE asked about the Accessing Inverness Scheme?• DH explained that there are wider projects in the City including a Transport Project, which will involve Academy Street, is being developed• Footfall figures will be very relevant moving forward• The Academy Street Entrance is an important entrance as it is the first thing people see coming out of the Station.• A lot of ongoing projects in the City Centre have been held up due to the pandemic• Not all aspects of the Academy Street Entrance were undertaken but hopefully will be in the future.• Not able to move forward with the Shop facades but hope there will be other funding streams we can apply to when we are ready.• Modest improvements could be made to the Church Street entrance to lighten it and tidy it up• WM worried that there is no heating planned in the new development which will result in customers being cold and not returning• JM advised that there is provision being made for hanging heaters and DH explained that the Council is working to a budget and within an old building so assessing options was very important before a heating system could be selected.• Arrangements have now been made to install heating and JK will be able to answer questions on the selected heating option.• DH confirmed that the challenge of heating provision had not being ignored and could only be addressed now.• BM suggested finding out what type of heating installed in the Aberdeen's Union Square• Clarification to be sought from JK as part of the overall project.• It must be remembered that this is a historical building.• JE felt the issue of the heating should have been addressed by now, It should have been the first thing to be considered.• JM confirmed that heating and lighting has been on the agenda at every meeting with the architects.	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH further explained that the Budget allocated from the ICGF needs to be spent wisely. The heating has always been a problem and we needed to have a project before any decisions could be made. • WM commented that at last week's meeting JM agreed the Entrances and especially the canopies were horrible. Something needs to be done. • DH confirmed that the Council is committed to improving the Entrances and any quick-fire ways to get people into the market would be considered. • Larger projects need more consideration. • DH not ignoring the entrances, but all resources are going into the major refurbishment. If anyone has any quick improvements that can be done, please let us know. • The entrances not adequate for the building and don't reflect the building. Discussed with JK but need to get a design and costings but can't do everything at the same time. Need to discuss which project to be taken forward next. • DH need to be realistic on what can be achieved. Funding opportunities shouldn't be missed. • JM and DH speak to JK about what can realistically be taken forward. • IM felt there must more post covid funding coming forward. • Relevant that the Traders are discussing this at their meetings. • Lighting brought up at a Traders meeting last year and this has now been sorted. • WM felt It would be better having the canopies removed and nothing there than having them there. • IM need to bear in mind that over the last year officers have been involved in other things. • It was asked if there was only going to be one entrance for people to come and go in the evening. • JM advised that glass doors are to be installed at the clock which can be opened and closed as necessary. This can be a matter for discussion at a later date on whether they should be open in the evening for customers to exit though the other exits. • It was felt that Church Street needs to be a fairly prominent entrance. • The Website being updated at the moment • BID Ambassadors will be in the Market on the 26th • The Victorian Market has approximately 5.5k followers on Facebook but needs to be on Instagram and Twitter and use social media effectively • Corporate Communications Team to help JM exploring partners to help with this. 	
5.	Stakeholder Group – Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When it was originally conceived the Stakeholders Group remit was to help to develop the Action Plan • Contributions were originally given by Inverness BID, FSDS, Inverness Chamber and other businesses from surrounding areas but over the last year attendance at these meetings has been sparse. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Stakeholder Group has delivered what it set out to do and we now have a very strong project in the refurbishment of the Market Hall. • Should the Stakeholder Group now be put into abeyance? • There is now a vibrant Traders Group led by John which meets regularly and many of the issues the Stakeholder Group deal with could be dealt with by the Trader Group. • There is to be a report to the CIAC in August which could recommend a revamped forum for the group and therefore reform the Stakeholder Group into a more workable model. • JC would be happy to stand down from the group at the start there was role for Eastgate but maybe not now. • JE commented that things are discussed at several meetings before a commitment is given and if we hadn't had the discussion about the heating tonight, we may have opened the Market without any heating. • DH said there has always been a commitment to look at the heating. • GR vital that we have these open and frank discussions. • Now at the stage that we look at practical details that need to be resolved and this could be done with the City Manager, the Market Manager and the Traders • DH Over next 6-8 a more focussed way of engaging with the Stakeholders will be considered. 	
6.	AOCB	<p><u>Service Charge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculation and Application of the Service Charge this has come into the public domain as it was in the marketing brochures for the new unit and has been picked up by the Highland News. • The Press Article picked up some of the same concerns as the Trader Group did at the recent meeting held with Council Officials included representation from the Estates Team. • Unfortunately, at that meeting Graham and Sibbald were unable to attend, they would have been able to give more background on how the Service Charge was calculated. • Clarity is now needed on how the figures are calculated • The article raised the point that the occupation cost for the new units is oin excess of market rates compared to similar Units outside the Victorian Market and this may put potential tenants off. • DH advised that a meeting with Council officers and Graham and Sibbald will be arranged for the Traders to discuss this and answer any questions. • The Service Charge reflects the cost of running the building and this is an expensive building to run. It is an old building. However, efficiencies will be sought and where practicable, options placed for tenants to consider. • At present all costs are included in the rent but the introduction of a service charge will make it more transparent ore open and accountable. • The Service Charge will include security, waste management and running costs for common areas. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AJ advised that capital costs cannot be included, and the Service Charge should not be the same for all units. • A range figure should be shown for the Service Charge depending upon type of business etc. • DH confirmed that the correct information is all on the website for the new units, but AJ feels it should be updated. • DH will speak to KF and Robbie at Graham and Sibbald and get a detailed response to AJ's points. • IM advised that the correct officer will be able to give clarification. • BM feels that all tenants get a good deal in the Victorian Market. • JC commented that the service charge for each unit is based on the square footage and worked out at £28 per square foot and all is based on the Rics code. Refunds should be given if all the money is not spent. Although this is dearer than Eastgate the rent in Eastgate is much dearer. • GR hard to compare between the Victorian Market and Eastgate Centre but it will be good to get the clarification from the relevant officers. • DM need to be aware the economy landscape has changed for businesses over the last year. The council must be seen to be fair and equitable and must be cognisant of what is happening around us. • MS everyone wants the development to be a success. • JE commented that the Rics guidelines demands that the service charge demonstrates value for money and feels that this will be very challenging for the Council. • Clarity on this is needed going forward • JM has found this a useful discussion. In the two weeks since the units were advertised there has been a significant interest in them. There has been one query on service charge, and no one has commented that the rents are too high. • There appears to be a keen interest in people wanting to apply won't know how many until 26th May. <p>ACTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project updates will continue to be given • Heating – have noted all concerns and options will be discussed with JK • Entrances – have noted all suggestions and will discuss with JK • Will look at ways to revamp and remodel how the Council engages with the Stakeholder Group and a report will be taken to the CIAC in August • The comments about the Service Charge have been noted and DH will come back with full details which will give a better understanding of how it is calculated. • Please contact DH or JM if anyone has any queries. 	<p>JM/JK DH/JM/JK DH/JM/JK DH</p> <p>DH</p>
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		<u>Date of next meeting</u> Date of Next Meeting – tbc	
		The meeting ended at around 7.50pm	

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held remotely on Monday, 15 March 2021 at 11.00 am.

Present:

Highland Council:

Mr I Brown
Mrs I Mackenzie
Mr D Macpherson
Mr G Ross
Mr C Smith

Non Members in Attendance:-

Mr B Boyd
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair
Mr K Gowans

Other Representatives:

Mr M Smith, Manager, Inverness BID
Mr M Golding, Visit Loch Ness
Ms J Cuddy, Manager, Eastgate Shopping Centre
Ms J Murray, Victorian Market Manager

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr M MacDonald, Corporate Improvement Project Manager
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Performance & Governance Service

Mr G Ross in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Exclusion of the Public

Members **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 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.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated Minutes from the previous Meeting held on 17 August, 2020, the terms of which were **NOTED**.

Arising from the Minutes, the following matters were raised:-

i Northern Meeting Park, Inverness – it was advised that the Community Group that were interested in the Park were working collaboratively with the Council and High Life Highland on plans for the future use of the Park. Funding had been received to undertake a feasibility study on the future of the Park. Further, an agreement had been reached to share the Park with the Cricket Club, who had installed an all-weather Cricket Wicket at their cost. An inaugural meeting of the Northern Meeting Park Group would be arranged around the end of April, 2021.

ii Fraser Park and Clubhouse – It was advised that plans were in hand to make better use of Fraser Park for Cricket. In terms of the Clubhouse, part of it was in use, but the other part was derelict and there were plans to use this for a good purpose. Progress on this would be checked and an update provided to local Members at the next Ward Business meeting on the potential use of the Clubhouse.

iii Recognising the UK Cabinet Meeting held in the Town House, September 1921 - it was advised that celebrations were being considered and it was intended to have discussion on this with the Scottish Office to see what would be appropriate to mark the occasion. It may be appropriate to also extend an invitation to a notable diplomat to any event as the signing of the Inverness agreement was the first stage in Ireland gaining its independence. There were also strong cultural links between Scotland and Ireland. An update on discussions on this issue would be provided at a future meeting.

5. Update on CIAC Report

There was re-circulated Report No. CIA/3/21 dated 28 January, 2021 by the Executive Chief Officer, Transformation. An update was provided by Officers following decisions taken at the City of Inverness Area Committee on 18 February, 2021. Members noted that all the recommendations were agreed at CIAC and to comment on the proposed actions.

A plan on how to deliver a programme of events and festivals would be brought to the Committee at a future meeting. Key components of the plan would be that it was value for money to the Inverness Common Good Fund, that there was benefit to the people of Inverness, links to recovery from Covid-19 and would detail the roles and responsibilities of the Council, Partners, Suppliers and the Artistic Community. However, given the uncertainty over Covid-19 a cautious approach would be taken to holding any future events.

The plan would involve collaborative engagement with Partners, the Council's agent High Life Highland, Suppliers and those who deliver events such as Inverness Caledonian Thistle. Meetings would also be held with those who can deliver on the Artistic content of events such as Eden Court. There was also a

great opportunity to look at holding community events in the broader Inverness area. The possibility of holding virtual events would also be considered.

The Events Industry and Government were in talks regarding the possibility of holding limited events sometime late Summer, subject to Covid-19 community transmission being low enough to allow restrictions to be lifted.

At present the Events Manager Post, funded by the Inverness Common Good Fund, remained vacant. This has greatly reduced capacity to deliver events temporarily. . It was being considered whether a new Events Manager would be appointed or whether organising events and festivals could be carried out by one of the Council's potential agents High Life Highland. Inverness College UHI had an events management course and it might be that a Student in their final year could be seconded to work on the events and festivals programme.

It was explained that proposals will be given further consideration and will be reported to the City Area Committee set for 27 May.

A Covid risk assessment would need to be carried out on what measures were required in order to protect the public at any events arranged.

It was suggested that car boot sales be re-introduced in Inverness. Income gained from such events could be put towards charitable purposes or the Inverness Events and Festivals programme.

It was advised that an extra £20k of Town Centre Funding had been awarded for City Centre marketing.

Thereafter, the Working Group **NOTED** the update on events and festivals and that a plan on how to deliver a programme of events and festivals would be brought to the Committee at a future meeting.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group **NOTED** that the date of the next meeting would be announced in due course.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm

**City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub-Group
Monday 1 March 2021 at 10:00am**

ACTION NOTE

Present:

Cllr Alex Graham (AG); Cllr Bill Boyd (BB); Cllr Carolyn Caddick (CC); Cllr Duncan Macpherson (DM); Cllr Emma Knox (EK); Cllr Emma Roddick (ER); Cllr Elizabeth McAllister (EM); Cllr Graham Ross (GR); Cllr Jimmy Gray (JG); Cllr Janet Campbell (JC); Cllr Ron MacWilliam (RM); Cllr Trish Robertson (TR); David Haas (DH), Inverness City Manager; Allan Maguire (AM), Head of Development & Regeneration; Alison MacNeill (AMN), Senior Public Relations Officer; Danny Gallagher (DG), Business Gateway Service & Dev Manager; Ch Insp Mairi MacInnes (MM), Police Scotland; David Shayer (DS), Aye Stay Guest House

	Items	Note/Action Agreed	Action For	Action Undertaken
1.	Welcome/Apologies for Absence			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GR welcomed Members and ran through the usual protocols to be adhered to during the meeting • NOTED apologies received from Cllr Andrew Jarvie, Cllr Isabelle MacKenzie and Malcolm Macleod 		
2.	Effects of the Pandemic on B&B Sector			
		<p>David Shayer, Aye Stay Guest House gave Members an overview of the current situation from a B&B/Self catering perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Alliance has been set up of self-catering and B&B owners across Scotland who feel they are not being represented • Scottish funding steams different for the other UK countries, the Alliance is lobbying this further • DS advised the feeling from those in the sector he has spoken with are not expecting a boom this year, similar to last year it is expected hotel prices will be reduced to rates that are not feasible to compete with • June is looking like the earliest possible opportunity for businesses to open • Not much optimism for the year ahead with English tourism needed it staycation is to happen this year as Scottish market along isn't sustainable enough. DS advised there are concerns regarding the messaging from Scottish Government which may prevent bookings with holiday markers booking Devon, Cornwall etc. instead • 2022 is being looked at for a real recovery with international customers. It is thought this winter will be hard • Also concerns on the Scottish Governments plans to look at licensing B&B's. With recovery these additional costs aren't needed. Thought many small businesses will close • NOTED JG queried what could be done collectively to promote the Highlands and make it more attractive when welcoming people back. The suggestion of 		

City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub-Group
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- virtual tours of the area to show people what they are missing
- Hospitality Businesses can promote in England but are not allowed to promote available dates which are covered by COVID Restrictions
 - DS advised there is a possibility of negative feedback from those locally concerned about attracting tourists out with the area. There is still nervousness around the virus
 - DS suggested the possibility of encouraging something similar to the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme for accommodation as bookings are now reliant on the web as the Tour Company market has dried up due to domestic travelers not requiring this service
 - **NOTED** sympathy with the pressures on the Hospitality Sector but advised in the Aird and Loch Ness area English Travelers seem to be majority wanting to visit the area. It is recognised a balance needs to be struck. EK advised DS she would be happy to respond to any examples of English travel via email direct
 - **NOTED** regarding English travel and emphasised the importance of communication and ensuring a positive message through coordination with partners. People need to feel safe and the coordination together over the next couple of weeks will be crucial to ensure any negativity is changed into positive messaging
 - DS suggested that the wrong message may be going out from last year with staycations. Crieff Hydro and other business were full so there is concern from private owners as this wasn't the case seen by all
 - **NOTED** importance of ensuring those such as Visit Scotland are broadcasting in England
 - **NOTED** importance of the message going out needs to be welcoming while encouraging and promoting a local and friendly Highlands. Suggestion of possible package to welcome people back
 - DS highlighted to Members he felt that the current look of the Town Centre needed address with vacant shops etc. Possible suggestion of rents in town being linked to revenue. **ACTION:** DH to feedback to BID to see what can be done in improving Streetscene and delivering strong Marketing Campaign via the joint programme between the two BIDS
 - **NOTED** encouraged quick recovery while ensuring everything is made safe. Marketing message is important and ensuring everyone is welcomed back.

DH

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		<p>Raised questions on what the Council could do to contain costs. BB will arrange an offline meeting with DS to discuss items further</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members are aware of the important role of B&B's and accommodation for the Inverness economy • NOTED emphasised and encouraged the Council to look further at the need to start building Inverness as winter market destination. This was held off last year due to the covid market. GR advised in terms of development it is hoped some kind of events programme will be established later this year • NOTED GR highlighted if DS had any additional comments that could help the city recovery from the pandemic these are to be advised of to ensure if possible, they are accommodated 		
3.	Operation Respect Festive 2020 Report			
		<p>Chief Inspector Mairi MacInnes updated Members on the review and evaluation taken place since the 2020 Festive campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different focus this year as there was no night-time economy due to COVID so the focus was on protecting the vulnerable and highlighting community safety • Report highlighted demand reduction which showed people were receiving the correct response at the time • Report found Partnership working and offering direct support at the time of crisis worked well • Mental Health Engagement didn't go so well as there was delays. It is hoped once assessment centre at New Craig's is established in future this will improve • Police recorded over 100 hours of patrols and the cycle patrols have been well received • NOTED commended the work down by the Police team throughout the period • NOTED emphasised how disappointing it was with the accessing of mental health assessments. Recognised there are many mental health issues that require professional assistance so advised it was encouraging to see more support being developed moving forward • Volume of mental health cases are constant and increasing • Lessons are being used to improve services. Tools within the Inverness 		

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		<p>Response Team are being used. Looking for Operation Respect to continue on a longer term this year due to the pandemic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MM advised Police are planning and preparing for a busy summer with possibility of summer staycation depending on tiers so whatever the outcome of easing restrictions are they will be prepared • MM will continue to report back at various stages to the Community Safety Partnership • NOTED JC personal thanks to Officers for help and support received with recent situation • NOTED GR thank MM on behalf of the City for the work that has been undertaken both from the Partnership aspect and for the work done throughout the year to keep residents of the City safe • ACTION: The full report is to be circulated to Members to give an opportunity to read through. Any further questions are to be feedback through MM to respond 	<p align="center">MM/DH</p>	<p align="center"><i>Report has been circulated to Members</i></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Campervan Facilities</p>			
		<p>DH updated Members on a number of ongoing projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Branding- concerns heard on timing. Time is now being used to build the brand for the city as a place in the Highlands. Looking to link in with developments already ongoing in the City. NOTED it is hoped to present an outline Plan to the next CARG meeting. Marketing- sensitive timed opportunity to sell the city. Joint work ongoing with both BIDs. Feedback from DS and B&B position will be taken back. Work is being done separately with the Ward Management team to connect with Communities to ensure an understanding of concerns and threats to ensure confidence is built to make people feel safe • High Street Decluttering- plans have been circulated. Lighting will be greatly improved once in place. Understanding this is likely to happen in the next couple of weeks. 3 virtues have now been cleaned and a programme of street cleaning is to continue over the next couple of months to ensure clean streets are lockdown is eased • Regular Business Liaison meetings are taking place with a number of Partners to ensure the right messaging, to also understand and address problems quickly • Campervan Facilities- constructive discussions have been had with the 	<p align="center">DH</p>	

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		<p>Harbour and Sinclair Browne on possible opportunities around the Marina and Shore Street. Looking to manage waste from campervans on a temporary basis. Wider Inverness area is also being looked at</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTED encouraged the clean-up and emphasised the huge difference power hosing can make. Recommend once City Fibre work has been carried out • NOTED suggestion of having fairy lights all year round in additional to new lighting to give warmth and encourage people to walk down streets • NOTED mood lighting would make a big difference and feel more welcoming. Also believed campervan facilities would bring benefit to the local economy • NOTED GR highlighted DH has also had positive discussions with Torvean Caravan Park and Royal Mail facilities on possible stopover in the City Centre 	DH/Alan MCKinnie	
5.	Notes of Previous Meeting			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was AGREED the notes of the previous meeting were an accurate record 		
6.	Matters Arising from Previous Notes			
		<p>Danny Gallagher: Business Gateway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discretionary Fund has now launched, Council lead. Almost 700 applications received. Business Gateway has sent around another email ensuring those having issues with submitting documentation can go to BG by email for help. There has been a struggle with a lot of applications with information and bank statements resulting in this taking longer than expected • £6M prosperity fund, to be able to grow support for small businesses hoped this will go through on Thursday • Business Gateway are continuing support for all businesses in the Highlands with 1-1 support. Podcasts available online • ACTION: DH and DG to take forward with the Business Liaison Group the link between business groups and groups springing up from certain sectors who voices may not be heard • ACTION: DG and DS to liaise offline further regarding questions raised on 	DH/DG DG/DS	

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		<p>B&B grants Food and Drink Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal is now heavily in the planning stage. A proposal is being pulled together to see if the trail can be implemented on a trial period in the city centre as lockdown is eased to attract people in and stay longer <p>Spaces for People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further discussion was had on this at CIAC <p>Allan Maguire: Revenue Support Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Government gave one week for ideas on how the Council could utilise spend to support recovery. This funding was specifically for support revenue funding. This would need to be legally committed before the end of March Series of proposals were submitted looking at long term recovery, kick start recovery project masterplan for Inverness. Low Carbon agenda and bid for transport study based on discussions at CIAC. Inverness retail and property market kickstart from previous analysis. Inverness rebranding and also extending the Bounceback Campaign AM gave apologies for the short timeline but the Scottish Government required quick action. It is not yet known if any bids were successful NOTED e understood why money would be allocated to studies and analysis but expressed frustration at this NOTED the importance of capitalising on Ness Walk and developing this further. The plans for Northern Meeting Park need to be made clearer. City Centre needs to be made as safe as possible through spend, not just advising through communication. AM advised the Bus Link contract can now be let as landowners bank have signed the deed of servitude. There are no exact timescales yet. ACTION: AM to check with Colin Howell and advise at next meeting NOTED confident and satisfied on listings advised by AM and wished the team luck moving forward NOTED Whin Park could do with being refreshed and also would like to see a bike park introduced in the Inshes Ward to benefit the Community. GR advised Whin Park improvements are being looked at going forward. Believe Whin Park is real asset and opportunity <p>Allan Maguire: Update on City Centre Projects</p>	<p align="center">AM</p>	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Project- enabling works are proceeding well and various studies are being undertaken. Challenge faced with well and how to clean this out • Farmfoods- delayed due to cold weather, hoped completion will be this week • Arnotts Building - demolition to start on Barron Taylor Street section shortly. Stripping out works underway. <p>Chisholm's Building- Highland Housing Alliance ran, final proposals are being worked on for the retaining wall. Behind scenes progressing well</p> <p>NOTED concerns raised by DS on B&B association side of Council and BID backing additional hotels. It is recognised this more a commercial decision tied in development planning. Further discussions will be had with hoteliers and business groups. It is the understanding existing hotels have already raised this issue so planning will be aware</p> <p>NOTED highlighted that Inverness could be more as a conference centre. This will attract larger travel which will likely increase occupancies levels so thought this may also benefit</p> <p>David Haas: Victorian Market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is progressing with enabling works • It is hoped all stripping out will be done before the end of lockdown • Work is being done to find a solution to take cabins off the street noting the City Fibre Works • Trying to reduce disruption to current tenants, using time before end of lockdown for more invasive works 		
7.	Date of Next Meeting			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTED the next meeting is to be scheduled for Thursday 1st April AM 	DH/HT	

City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub-Group
Thursday 1 April 2021 at 11:00am

ACTION NOTE

Present:

Cllr Alex Graham (AG); Cllr Carolyn Caddick (CC); Cllr Duncan Macpherson (DM); Cllr Elizabeth McAllister (EM); Cllr Graham Ross (GR); Cllr Jimmy Gray (JG); Cllr Janet Campbell (JC); Cllr Isabelle Mackenzie (IM); Cllr Margaret Davidson (MD); David Haas (DH), Inverness City Manager; Allan Maguire (AM), Head of Development & Regeneration; Ch Insp Mairi MacInnes (MM), Police Scotland; Mike Smith (MS), Inverness BID; Michael Golding (MG), Visit Inverness Loch Ness; Duncan Mckenzie (DM), Corporate Communications & Engagement Officer; Craig Baxter (CB), Planner

	Items	Note/Action Agreed	Action For	Action Undertaken
1.	Welcome/Apologies for Absence			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GR welcomed Members and ran through the usual protocols to be adhered to during the meeting • NOTED apologies received from Cllr Boyd, Cllr Robertson, Stewart Nicol, Malcolm Macleod 		
2.	Operation Respect Day Time			
		<p>Ch Insp Mairi MacInnes updated Members as followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation Respect launches today with significant timelines in the weeks ahead with dedicated resources and a plan • Increase in activity is anticipated over the Easter Weekend with a number of shops being able to open under the new criteria from Monday • Focusing on key date of 26th April with further restrictions easing • Recognised the first weekend of good weather will be a trigger point. This is difficult to plan ahead but sufficient resources are in place to respond • Travel into the area is expected from this weekend with the guidance of stay local open to interpretation • May Scottish Parliamentary Elections, Euro Football and opening of license premises are all expected to have an impact • MM ensured the Police will not loose focus on those vulnerable from drink and drug harm in the City Centre. Mental health is continuing to be an overwhelming priority at the moment and this is increasing • Police have been looking at the areas involving people while BID and the Council have pulled together an action plan looking at place to ensure the streets are clearer and more presentable in preparation for reopening • Environmental Health also have a plan for the easing of restrictions. This will be circulated to Members confidentially for information. ACTION: DH/LM to action • Plans for Street Pastors to also return as lockdown is eased • Members acknowledged the challenges faced moving forward and the 	DH/LM	<i>Complete</i>

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		importance of joint communication and messaging as restrictions are eased		
3.	Business Update			
		<p>Mike Smith updated Members on Businesses in the City Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from essential Businesses allowed to trade during the second lockdown have said it was much slower than the first time • Review done has identified 43 shop vacancies in the City Centre. 58% of these have been vacant for more than a year • Closures of Debenhams, Edinburgh Woollen Mill and Arcadia are significant, but Inverness numbers of losses are less than what other Towns have suffered • Recognised crucial to retain anchor tenants such as M&S and TKMaxx moving forward • Thought the majority of independent retailers will open on 26th April, starting with less staff on limited hours etc • Important to ensure Businesses receive the best positive guidance as soon as possible so they can operate safely in line with the regulations. Good news to see COVID Officers have now been appointed • Recognised the need to ensure public confidence through a positive joint agency approach as the public's habits seem to have changed • BID and VILN have plans in place to do a light touch marketing campaign for the reopening on 5th April. A bigger campaign will then follow in the week leading up to 26th April with MFR, social media promotions etc. There are then plans for further light touch campaign when hospitality hours are extended in May • VILN and BID are to promote staycation as cruise liners are not expected to make a return this summer. VILN are in the process of putting together a transport webinar in May, this will be on offer once arranged • Important to promote food businesses that are still open in the city centre • Farmers Market is to be restart this weekend • Recognised the importance of collaboration between Partners at this time • DH confirmed there are plans in place and money in the budget to reopen Castle Wynd toilets by 26th April • DH confirmed it is believed now is the right time to launch Inverness PLC. Moving forward there will be expertise from Kevin Murray Associates looking 		

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		at building a strategy for the city to give a sense of place for Inverness in the Highlands. The focus is currently on interviews with a number of Stakeholders before meeting again in key time to agree some actions before a report is brought back to Members at a future meeting		
4.	Marketing Plan			
		<p>Michael Golding briefed Members on the Boundary Campaign and the work VILN has done over the last year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High visitor interest for the area with 46% of Scots likely to be the realistic market size this year but there is a disconnect as only 5% have booked • Situation is expected to improve after 26th April • Unemployment situation continues to be monitored • VILN continued their membership delivery throughout the COVID period. Members were encouraged if they knew of any businesses suited to encourage them to get in contact with VILN • Important to look forward and be positive to give people an experience which will ensure they want to comeback year on year • Regular communication is ongoing with the destinations and working together in terms of business partnership. MG is happy to have further conversations offline if more information is required regarding links between partners • Conversations need to be had around promoting walkways for slow tourism as it is recognised this is underpromoted • In terms of long-distance routes VILN are looking to pull together a general management document to answer who people will go to with queries. Once produced this will be promoted and circulated • Loch Ness 360 Challenge due to take place end of May has been postponed for 12 months 		
5.	Key Strategic Projects			
		<p>Allan Maguire updated Members on the Scottish Government Revenue Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The funding of £120K identified for revenue support. Members were previously briefed on the strategic mater plan for the city centre and the potential projects • 360 Architects have been appointed. There are plans to invite them to a future CARG meeting to present their findings 		

**City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub-Group
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Present:

Cllr Alex Graham (AG); Cllr Carolyn Caddick (CC); Cllr Duncan Macpherson (DM); Cllr Elizabeth McAllister (EM); Cllr Graham Ross (GR); Cllr Jimmy Gray (JG); Cllr Janet Campbell (JC); Cllr Isabelle Mackenzie (IM); Cllr Margaret Davidson (MD); David Haas (DH), Inverness City Manager; Allan Maguire (AM), Head of Development & Regeneration; Ch Insp Mairi MacInnes (MM), Police Scotland; Mike Smith (MS), Inverness BID; Michael Golding (MG), Visit Inverness Loch Ness; Duncan Mckenzie (DM), Corporate Communications & Engagement Officer; Craig Baxter (CB), Planner

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graham and Sibbald have been appointed for the retail impact assessment and it is hoped there will be a report back at the end of the month on their findings • Initial works on Northern Meeting Park • £20K has been contributed to BID's Bounceback Campaign. Funding has also gone towards the rebranding project • Continuing to push forward with revenue supported projects to tackle issues to take forward <p>Allan Maguire updated Members on the progress of the projects in the City Centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Farmfoods- now completed and tenants have moved in. 2 commercial units are to be let to a local architect • Arnotts Building- Progressing well, contractor is performing with great skill and care. ACTION: AM to circulate photos from inside the building to Members • Chisholm's Building- Demolished and HHA are taking this over with Compass. NOTED AM confirmed the works carried out would have no impact to the other buildings on the street. Any works would be the owner's responsibility • Church Street- Work is well underway and panelling is going up this week • The opportunity is being taken to do as much of the major works on projects prior to 26th April as possible • Victorian Market- Enabling works are just about completed. Work is being done to ensure works are as least disruptive as possible. Academy Street is open and free of works. Union Street has the skip and bins, but this is being managed to ensure shops still have their required access • Recognised that now is the time to get some PR out to ensure everyone is aware of the ongoing projects in the City Centre <p>Active Travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Priority Rapid Fund- work will start 5th April at Farraline Park/Rose Street. Operationally working with Stagecoach. This was no cost to the council as it came from Scottish Government external funding and will then be finished by the developer • In the process of removing the temporary red and white bricks and replacing this with a less visually intrusive bollard. While at the same time is giving confidence for space • £15K has been given to look at transport strategy issues, it is hoped by the 	<p align="center">AM</p>	<p align="center"><i>Complete</i></p>
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**City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub-Group
Thursday 1 April 2021 at 11:00am**

ACTION NOTE

Present:

Cllr Alex Graham (AG); Cllr Carolyn Caddick (CC); Cllr Duncan Macpherson (DM); Cllr Elizabeth McAllister (EM); Cllr Graham Ross (GR); Cllr Jimmy Gray (JG); Cllr Janet Campbell (JC); Cllr Isabelle Mackenzie (IM); Cllr Margaret Davidson (MD); David Haas (DH), Inverness City Manager; Allan Maguire (AM), Head of Development & Regeneration; Ch Insp Mairi MacInnes (MM), Police Scotland; Mike Smith (MS), Inverness BID; Michael Golding (MG), Visit Inverness Loch Ness; Duncan Mckenzie (DM), Corporate Communications & Engagement Officer; Craig Baxter (CB), Planner

		<p>end of the month there will be initial findings available</p> <p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A meeting has been scheduled for 14th April to meet with Sinclair Browne and Shane Manning to discuss Campervan Facilities. Both Harbour Gate and Shore Street are being looked at. ACTION: DH to send DM the plans offline so he can establish the locations Network Rail have set up a steering group to look at the master plan for the area. When in the position to do so it has been suggested they present their ideas to CARG to ensure a political steer Potential cost natural parking incentives are being looked at the help welcome and encourage people back to the City Centre 	DH	<i>Complete</i>
6.	Notes of Previous Meeting			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was AGREED the notes of the previous meeting were an accurate record 		
7.	Matters Arising from Previous Notes			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOTED JC respectfully asked if the markings on the back of the 3 virtues could be addressed. ACTION: DH to look into this further ACTION: GR to share comments received from David Shayer with Members for information, it was highlighted some are not the Councils responsibility NOTED MG advised David Shayer is a Member of VILN but the views given at the previous meeting were his own and not that of the Group 	DH GR	
8.	Date of Next Meeting			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was AGREED the next meeting would be scheduled for Monday 17th May at 11am via MS Teams. This is to allow Officers time to progress actions 	HT	