

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Monday 13 February 2023 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Mr C Aitken	Mr D Gregg
Mr C Ballance	Mrs J Hendry
Mr B Boyd	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr I Brown	Mr A MacKintosh
Mr M Cameron	Mr R MacKintosh
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair	Ms K MacLean
Mr A Christie	Mr D Macpherson
Mr D Fraser	Mrs B McAllister
Mr K Gowans	Mrs M Reid
Mr A Graham	Mrs T Robertson

Officials in Attendance:

Mr A Gunn, Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place
Ms A Clark, Head of Community Support and Engagement, Communities and Place
Ms T Urry, Head of Roads and Infrastructure
Mrs S McKandie, Interim Head of Revenues and Business Support
Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager, Communities and Place
Mr M Greig, Ward Manager, Communities and Place
Mr M MacKay, Ward Manager, Communities and Place
Mr K Forbes, Property Manager (Estates Management)
Mr J Taylor, Roads Operations Manager, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy
Mr S Grant, Senior Engineer, Infrastructure, Environment and Economy
Ms A Wasko, Principal Housing Officer, Housing and Property Service
Mrs L Dunn, Joint Democratic Services Manager, Performance and Governance
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer, Performance and Governance

Also in Attendance:-

Chief Inspector J Hill, Area Commander (Inverness Area Command), Police Scotland

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to Committee.

Mr I Brown in the Chair

Preliminaries

Prior to the commencement of formal business, the Chair made the following announcements in relation to the New Year Honours List:-

- Dr Malcolm Monteith Steven, a founder and Trustee of the Puffin Hyrdotherapy Pool charity, had been awarded an MBE for his services to the community in the Highlands and Islands; and
- Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Andrew Kent, Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgeon, Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, had been awarded an OBE for services to UK health support overseas, particularly in Ukraine and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Committee **NOTED** the position and congratulated the recipients.

**1. Apologies for Absence
Leisgeulan**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms H Crawford, Ms E Knox and Mr A Sinclair.

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

The Committee **NOTED** the following Transparency Statements:-

Item 3: Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg

Item 8.d: Mr A Christie, Mr D Gregg and Mr K Gowans

**3. Police – Area Performance Report
Poileas – Geàrr-aithisg Coileanadh Sgìreil**

Transparency Statements: The undernoted Members declared connections to this item but, having applied the objective test and reviewed their position in relation to the item and any personal connection, they did not consider they had an interest to declare:-

Mr A Christie – as a Non-Executive Director of NHS Highland

Mr D Gregg – as an employee of NHS Highland

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/1/23 dated 3 February 2023 by the Inverness Area Commander.

During discussion, the following issues were raised and responded to:-

- it was queried whether the number of Police officers assigned to schools could be increased;
- reference was made to the low turnout at some “Coffee with a Cop” events, and it was suggested that Community Beat Officer attendance at Community Council meetings, which were well attended, would be more beneficial. It was also suggested that consideration be given to evening “Coffee with a Cop” events to accommodate those who worked during the day;
- there were high rates of crime detection in Highland as a result of the interaction between local Police and the public, and the importance of continuing to connect with communities was emphasised;
- concern having been expressed regarding the length of time taken to answer 101 calls, Chief Inspector Hill confirmed that she had asked an officer from the relevant division to come to a future Members’ Briefing to provide an opportunity for Members to raise concerns directly;
- it was important to recognise that the Police had finite resources and were trying to make the best use of what was available;
- public meetings did not always make the best use of time, and information was sought as to the format of the proposed engagement sessions;
- the Inverness Community Council Forum, which had been active prior to the pandemic, might be a useful platform for engaging with Community Councils. The Inverness City Area Manager concurred that this was an avenue worth exploring and undertook to liaise with Chief Inspector Hill in that regard;

- concern was expressed regarding anti-social behaviour by young people, and information was sought as to the message that was going out to young people about such behaviour and the platform for the voice of the older people who were being targeted;
- Community Beats Teams were commended for their helpful and supportive manner when responding to incidents;
- it would be useful to provide statistics for 2017/18 and 2018/19, pre-Covid, for the purposes of comparison;
- the figures appeared to indicate that a number of crimes had increased significantly, particularly carrying an offensive weapon, and further information was sought in that regard;
- many issues that Community Councils wanted to discuss could be addressed by any experienced Police officer, not just Community Beat Officers;
- in relation to theft by shoplifting, it would be useful to see a breakdown of what was being stolen – e.g. high value items to buy drugs, or food, milk etc in order to survive the cost of living crisis;
- in relation to the proposed expansion of 20mph zones, it was questioned how the Police were going to enforce the speed limit and educate people given their limited resources;
- drivers failing to stop at red lights at the Kingsmills junction had caused distress to residents, and thanks were expressed to Police officers for their response in that regard. It was added that residents had been asked to report licence plates when such incidents occurred, and it was queried what happened thereafter. Chief Inspector Hill undertook to revert to Members in that regard;
- thanks were expressed for the work on Operation Respect and the Harm Reduction Vehicle which helped to reduce the demands of Raigmore Hospital;
- Police officers carrying Naloxone would save lives and was welcomed;
- the rise in fraud was concerning, and it was queried what approaches were being adopted and whether the way the Police and Trading Standards worked together could be changed to improve detection rates;
- previous discussions had taken place about an online portal where dashcam and cycle camera footage could be uploaded to assist the Police in detecting crime, and an update was sought in that regard. It was added that the Bute House Agreement stated that Transport Scotland would work with Police Scotland on a pilot project to develop an online reporting system for anyone to upload camera footage of dangerous driving;
- it was questioned why some detection rates were more than 100%; and
- information was sought as to whether the Police paid for the use of office space within the Town House and what would happen when the building was vacated.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2020-2023 Year 3, attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 1 April 2022 to 31 December 2022; and
- ii. **AGREED** that the Inverness City Area Manager explore the possibility of reinstating Inverness Community Council Forum and liaise with Chief Inspector Hill regarding Police attendance thereat.

4. **Area Roads Capital Programme 2023/24** **Prògram Calpa Rathaidean na Sgìre 2023/24**

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/2/23 dated 25 January 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy.

During discussion the following main points were raised:-

- reference having been made to recent damage to Barn Church Road near the junction with the A96, it was confirmed that work had been and would continue to be undertaken in that area;
- information was sought, and provided, as to how Active Travel projects such as Academy Street and Riverside Way were coordinated with the Area Roads Capital Programme. In addition, it was suggested that consideration should be given to whether Active Travel projects should be reported to the City of Inverness Area Committee, not just as project proposals but as a Capital Programme;
- information was sought, and provided, regarding damage to roads by utility companies and whether the Council always had the resources to follow up and ensure any temporary repairs were made good. In addition, reference was made to instances of the Council not having been informed of utility works, and it was suggested there was a need for a joined-up app;
- concern was expressed that nearly 50% of the budget allocation for surface dressing was to be spent in Ward 12, which was not within the City of Inverness. The need for fairness and equity was emphasised, and it was suggested it was necessary to consider the formula used to allocate funding. It was added that it was perhaps time to think about having a City Committee rather than a City and Area Committee, and a wider debate was needed in that regard. The Chair emphasised that any proposed change to the formula or the Area Committee would be a matter for full Council;
- disappointment was expressed that only two short sections of road in Ward 19 were included in the Programme. Reference having been made to damage to road edges at tourist hotspots, it was confirmed that tourism funding had been awarded for Clava Cairns and it was a matter of getting a contractor to do the works;
- information was sought, and provided, as to whether the Council was proactive or reactive in terms of road repairs, and whether members of the public had any recourse when they damaged their vehicle only to be told they were the first person to report a pothole;
- it was queried whether maximum efficiency was being achieved and if there was sufficient manpower to deliver the Programme;
- Inverness was the most densely populated area of the Highlands therefore had the highest number of road users;
- it was queried how Members could make a case for road improvements in their ward;
- information was sought, and provided, regarding the number of Pothole Pro machines in operation;
- road repairs were an uphill battle in Highland due to the large geographical area;
- it was necessary to be more innovative and use new technology, and it was queried whether officers looked at what other local authorities were doing in that regard;
- the need to generate income was emphasised and, reference having been made to the significant number of tourist coaches that visited Highland, it was suggested that the Council should be considering a levy;
- Transport Scotland had machinery and manpower, and it was queried whether there was scope to coordinate projects and share resources;
- it was questioned whether the forthcoming improvements to Inshes junction were going to be sufficient;

- many businesses were being affected by the state of the roads and were asking Members what was going to be done;
- some constituents paid over £3k a year in Council Tax and were questioning what they were getting for that. Particular reference was made to the Crown area, which had an increasing number of potholes. Other Members added that paying more in Council Tax should not buy any kind of priority;
- it would be helpful to look at how the budget was allocated over a three or five-year period rather than on an annual basis;
- the issues with the roads in Highland were the result of a lack of investment over many years;
- it was disappointing that a £43m application to the Levelling Up Fund in respect of the NC500 had been refused by the UK Government as this could have freed up additional money that could have been utilised throughout Highland. It was added that having to compete against other local authorities for pots of money, spending valuable officer time on applications that went nowhere, was not acceptable and the need for consistent funding formulas from the Scottish and UK governments was emphasised;
- thanks were expressed to officers, who were doing the best they could with a limited budget, for their efforts and helpful approach when responding to Members' queries;
- the inclusion of Wade Road and Henderson Drive in the Programme was welcomed;
- clarification was sought, and provided, as to what residents should do if they were concerned about the condition of a particular road or pavement;
- there were defects on the A9 at the Raigmore interchange that had not been repaired by the Trunk Roads Authority, and it was queried how to ensure such issues were addressed; and
- a Special Meeting of the Committee or a Members' workshop was called for to discuss the A9 following the recent disappointing announcement that it would not be dualled. However, the Chair explained that this was a matter for the Full Council.

Thereafter, the Committee **APPROVED** the proposed 2023/24 Area Roads Capital Programme for the City of Inverness and Area.

5. Housing Revenue Account: Garage Rents 2023/24 Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Taigheadais: Màil Gharaidsean 2023/24

There had been circulated Report No CIA/3/23 dated 2 February 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- the impact of garage rent increases on the HRA was marginal and proposing the rents be increased by 4%, the same level of increase that had been applied to Council house rents;
- an increase of 10% in garage rents would allow for more investment in their repair and maintenance;
- concern at the current level of voids for garages and the potential to advertise their availability to the public, reference being made to the higher cost of self-storage units;
- concern that the Committee was being asked to make a decision on this item when there was uncertainty on the actual number of voids;

- the need to reflect throughout future reports the actual rent that would be charged to non-Council tenants who paid a higher rent due to the application of VAT;
- the primary focus should be on bringing void garages back into use and on developing a strategy based on the actual footprint of Council garages and garage sites. This should include the potential to market them for alternative uses and on managing the garage estate to create vacant sites for housing development;
- the potential to contact those tenants not using their garages to invite them to give up their tenancy, noting there was a current waiting list for garages in the area;
- an explanation was sought around the fact the income from garage rents was well in excess of the area repairs budget. In response, it was suggested that the opportunities to increase the repairs budget was a matter for consideration by the Housing and Property Committee;
- confirmation was sought and provided on the historic reasons as to why Inverness garage rents were well below the Highland average. It was also noted rents were well below the Scottish average; and
- confirmation was sought and provided that information on the current level of outstanding repairs to garages would be provided to Members outwith the meeting.

Thereafter, Mr I Brown seconded by Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair **MOVED** that a 10% increase be applied to Inverness Garages and Garage Sites.

Mr A Graham seconded by Mr D Greig moved as an **AMENDMENT** that a 4% increase be applied to Inverness Garages and Garage Sites.

On a vote being taken, there were 11 votes for the motion, 7 for the amendment and 2 abstentions, and the **MOTION** was carried, the votes having been cast as follows:

For the motion:

Mr C Ballance, Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mr M Cameron, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr D Fraser, Mr K Gowans, Mrs J Hendry, Mr R MacIntosh, Mrs K MacLean, Mrs M Reid

For the amendment:

Mr C Aitken, Mr A Christie, Mr A Graham, Mr D Gregg, Mr A MacIntosh, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs T Robertson,

Abstentions:

Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr D Macpherson

Decision

The Committee **AGREED** that a 10% increase be applied to Inverness Garages and Garage Sites.

**6. Inverness Wards Repurposing COVID-19 Fund
Maoin Ath-adhbharachaidh COVID-19 Uàrdan Inbhir Nis**

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/4/23 dated 26 January 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place.

The Committee **AGREED** the repurposing of the following COVID-19 funds:

- **Ward 13 – Inverness West**

£6,285 from the Ward COVID-19 Fund to support Muirtown Growing Project

- **Ward 17 – Culloden & Ardersier**

£21,00 from the Ward COVID-19 Fund to support Ardroy Road, Croy - Playpark

7. Ward 12 Aird & Loch Ness - Repurposing Place Based Investment Funding Allocation

Uàrd 12 na h-Àirde agus Loch Nis – Ag Ath-adhbharachadh Riarachadh Maoin eachadh Tasgaidh Stèidhichte air Àite

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/5/23 dated 26 January 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place.

During discussion, it was clarified that the Community Led budget had been reallocated towards the Inverness/Kiltarlity public bus service due to the urgency of the situation.

The Committee **AGREED**:-

- i. to repurpose £46,800 of Place Based Investment Funds for Ward 12 to support the re-instatement, for 12 months, of the Inverness to Kiltarlity / Kiltarlity to Inverness early morning and evening public bus services; and
- ii. the remaining unspent Place Based Investment Funds of £6,625, be allocated for play parks across the ward.

**8. Inverness Common Good Fund (ICGF)
Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis**

**a) Inverness Common Good Fund Annual Report 2021/22
Aithisg Bhliadhnail Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis 2021/22**

There had been circulated Joint Report No. CIA/6/23 dated 2 February 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place and Head of Corporate Governance.

The Committee **NOTED** the final monitoring report and Statement of Accounts for the Inverness Common Good Fund for the year ended 31 March 2022.

**b) Financial Monitoring
Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail**

There had been circulated Joint Report No. CIA/7/23 dated 7 February 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place and Head of Corporate Finance.

The Committee **NOTED** the financial monitoring report to 31 December 2022 and the projected outturns detailed in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report and the impact on the Fund's reserves.

c) Capital Projects Update Report
Aithisg às Ur mu Phròiseactan Calpa

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/8/23 dated 30 January 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Housing & Property.

The Committee **NOTED** the:-

- i. current status of capital projects; and
- ii. adjustments being made to the allocations within the Victorian Market, Market Hall and Fish Market Refurbishment project.

d) Grants Applications over £10,000
Iarrtasan Tabhartais thar £10,000

Transparency Statements: The undernoted Members declared connections to this item but, having applied the objective test and reviewed their position in relation to the item and any personal connection, did not consider they had an interest to declare:-

Mr A Christie – as a Non-Executive Director of NHS Highland

Mr D Gregg – as an employee of NHS Highland

Mr K Gowans declared a connection to the application by Inverness UHI as an employee of UHI. However, he had not been part of the application, which was for the student cohort and would be of no benefit to him personally, and therefore did not consider he had an interest to declare.

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/9/23 dated 10 November 2022 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place, and there had been circulated separately a copy of supporting documentation as Booklet A.

Applications were considered and determined as follows:

1. Inverness College UHI - £44,600, requested

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- many students had been unable to work during the Covid crisis, therefore had fewer savings and many were struggling financially due to the cost of living crisis; and
- although Members felt this was a worthwhile project and should be supported, some Members felt the project should be open to members of the public in addition to students, to ensure common good funds were distributed fairly. It was not known if this would be possible with regard to security at the campus. It was clarified that the application was competent even if restricted to UHI students, and that there were not sufficient funds available to fulfil the full request of £44,600.

Mr C Ballance, seconded by Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, **MOVED** to provide £22,300, which was 50% of the grant requested, for one year only, and to discuss with the applicant whether it was possible to extend the project to include members of the public.

Mr A Christie, seconded by Mrs T Robertson, moved as an **AMENDMENT** to provide £22,300, which was 50% of the grant requested, for one year only, subject to the applicant extending the project to include members of the public.

There were 12 votes for the motion and 8 for the amendment, and the **MOTION** was carried, the votes having been cast as follows:

For the motion: Mr C Balance, Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mr M Cameron, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr D Fraser, Mr K Gowans, Mr D Gregg, Mrs J Hendry, Mr R MacKintosh, Mrs K MacLean, Mrs M Reid

For the amendment: Mr C Aitkin, Mr A Christie, Mr A Graham, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr A MacKintosh, Mr D Macpherson, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs T Robertson

Decision:

The Committee **APPROVED** £22,300 for Inverness College UHI, which was 50% of the grant requested, for one year only, and **AGREED** to discuss with the applicant whether it was possible to extend the project to include members of the public

2. Visit Inverness Loch Ness Ltd

The Committee **APPROVED** a grant of £20,000.

3. Merkinch Community Centre

The Committee **APPROVED** a grant of £6,000.

4. Inverness BID Applications

The Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee had made recommendations regarding the applications submitted by Inverness BID and these were considered as follows:

4.1 The City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays 2023

A reduced grant of £64,150 had been recommended by the Sub-Committee.

Some Members expressed concern at the reduction in grant and felt the full amount should be awarded to ensure the city remained smart and attractive to residents and visitors. Other Members pointed out that it was not in effect a reduction as the requested project included a number of additional Display Baskets. Noting that the Common Good Fund was likely to lose further income as a result of the Council office staff vacating the Town House, it was important to make savings where possible.

Mr A Graham, seconded by Mr A Christie, **MOVED** to approve a grant of £69,378, which was a further £5,228 from 2022/23 surplus on the Common Good Fund.

Mr C Balance, seconded by Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, moved as an **AMENDMENT** to provide a reduced grant of £64,150 as recommended.

There were 7 votes for the motion and 12 for the amendment, and the **AMENDMENT** was carried, the votes having been cast as follows:

For the motion: Mr A Christie, Mr A Graham, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr A MacKintosh, Mr D Macpherson, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs T Robertson.

For the amendment: Mr C Aitkin, Mr C Ballance, Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr D Fraser, Mr K Gowans, Mr D Gregg, Mrs J Hendry, Mr R MacIntosh, Mrs K MacLean, Mrs M Reid.

Decision:

The Committee **APPROVED** a reduced grant of £64,150.

4.2 Operation Respect Easter/Summer/Autumn 2023

The Committee **APPROVED** a grant of **£11,596**

4.3 Inverness Gull Project 2023

The Sub-Committee had recommended refusal of the £12,839 grant.

Some Members pointed out that gulls in the city centre were a pest and liable to spread infection, noting the risk of cross infection of avian flu from birds to humans or other animals. The gull project had been successful for many years, with a cumulative effect which would be lost if the project ceased for a year, as proposed. It was acknowledged that the preservation of gulls was important but felt they should be discouraged from city centres as this was not their natural habitat, and they created mess and, at times, fear. It was pointed out that even if the project was approved, a licence would have to be sought from NatureScot prior to the commencement of any work.

Other Members referred to the impact of avian flu on the overall bird population, and the importance of allowing this protected species to recover in numbers for one year and thereafter recommence the gull project if deemed necessary.

Mr A Christie, seconded by Mrs I MacKenzie, **MOVED** to approve the application for £12,839.

Mrs Glynis Campbell-Sinclair, seconded by Mrs K MacLean, moved as an **AMENDMENT**, to refuse the application as recommended by the Sub-Committee.

There were 13 votes for the motion, 6 for the amendment, and one abstention, and the **MOTION** was carried, the votes having been cast as follows:

For the motion: Mr C Aitkin, Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mr A Christie, Mr D Fraser, Mr A Graham, Mr D Gregg, Mrs J Hendry, Mr A MacIntosh, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr D Macpherson, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs T Robertson.

For the amendment: Mr C Ballance, Mr M Cameron, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr K Gowans, Ms K MacLean, Mr R MacIntosh.

Abstention: Mrs M Reid

Decision:

The Committee **APPROVED** a grant of £12,839 for the Inverness Gull Project.

4.4 Inverness Community Safety Partnership 2023

The Committee **APPROVED** a grant of **£9,700**.

4.5 Coach Friendly Project 2023

The Committee **APPROVED** a grant of **£12,987**.

e) ICGF Budget Setting for 2023/24 and Capital Programme Suidheachadh Buidseit Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis airson 2023/24 agus Prògram Calpa

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/10/23 dated 1 February 2023 by the Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place and Head of Corporate Finance.

During discussion the following main points were raised:-

- some Members reported that the Red Hot Highland Fling, at Hogmanay 2022-23 had only been attended by 2,500-3,000 people and felt that, at a cost of £150k, did not represent a fair use of Common Good Funds, especially during a cost of living crisis. It was asked that any similar event in future be put to the full Committee for approval and the City Area Manager explained that the Committee had delegated powers to the Events and Festivals Working Group to decide on the events programme and that it was within the powers of the Committee to change this arrangement, should they so wish;
- other Members reported that up to 8,000 people had attended the Red Hot Highland Fling over the course of the evening, and spoke in favour of leaving the arrangements of events with the Working Group, noting that any member of the Committee was entitled to attend the meetings;
- it was suggested that attendance statistics for the Red Hot Highland Fling 2022-23 be made public;
- it was disappointing that during a climate emergency, a large bonfire was being burned for Guy Fawkes night;
- many events, such as the Botanics, had proved successful, popular, and well attended, and all events had brought economic benefit to the city, as well as pleasure for local residents, which was particularly relevant as part of covid recovery;
- in response to comments about hotels being booked out over Hogmanay, it was pointed out that many hotels put on their own entertainment for guests and it was not all down to the Red Hot Highland Fling;
- the debate about whether events should be ticketed or not, or chargeable or not, was ongoing, and sometimes events were ticketed for Health & Safety reasons, to avoid the danger of over-crowding. Ticketing events risked people taking free tickets but not using them;
- in relation to the Inverness Town House Car Park Income, there was a preference to operate the site as a permanent public car park;
- it was requested that progress with future planning for the Inverness Town House be reported back to the Committee;
- assurance was sought and provided that proposals for the 2023-24 winter payments would be presented to the Committee in June 2023. The welfare

team were thanked for their work in administering the 2022-23 winter payments successfully;

- in response to a question, it was explained that a budget allocation of £145k to the Victorian Market was to cover the cost of the service charge for empty units and this would reduce as the units were filled;
- it was hoped the marketing allocation for the Victorian Market would not be recurring given it was populated by private businesses and to avoid unfair competition for the businesses in the Eastgate centre;
- the value to the local economy of the Lochness marathon was pointed out and it was suggested they should be funded in some way;
- information was sought and provided on progress with the roll out of digital CCTV, which had been the subject of a recent Members' visit. The Common Good Fund provided funding but the project was being managed by the Council. Any reduction in funding would reduce the amount of time CCTV could be monitored; and
- the Events and Festivals team, including High Life Highland representatives, were thanked for their work on the events, including the Red Hot Highland Fling.

Mr I Brown, seconded by Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair **MOVED** the recommendations as detailed in the report.

Mr A Christie, seconded by Mr D Macpherson, moved as an **AMENDMENT** for the Events and Festivals Working Group to make recommendations to this Committee on an appropriate event for the 31 December 2023 prior to committing to delivering said event.

There were 11 votes for the motion and 9 for the amendment, and the **MOTION** was carried, the votes having been cast as follows:

For the motion: Mr C Ballance, Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mr M Cameron, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr D Fraser, Mr K Gowans, Mrs J Hendry, Mrs K MacLean, Mr R MacIntosh, Mrs M Reid.

For the amendment: Mr C Aitkin, Mr A Christie, Mr A Graham, Mr D Gregg, Mr A MacIntosh, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr D Macpherson, Mrs B McAllister, Mrs T Robertson.

Decision:

The Committee **AGREED:**

- i. the Common Good Fund budget for 2023/24 as detailed within the report and Appendices; and
- ii. Option 1 (Public Car Park) in relation to the Town House Car Park.

9. Inverness Community Partnership Com-pàirteachas Coimhearsnachd Inbhir Nis

The Committee **AGREED** that Mr Chris Ballance assume the position of Chair of the Inverness Community Partnership noting that this was with the consent of City Leader, Mr Ian Brown.

Mr Christie, while not objecting to Mr Ballance's appointment, added that it was disappointing the Administration had not nominated an Inverness-based Councillor for this organisation. He felt insufficient precedence was given to this group and its activities, and it was of concern that various meetings had been rescheduled. Consideration should be given to how the Committee could scrutinise and support the activities of this group to a greater extent. Mr Ballance explained two meetings had been postponed due to poor weather. Mr Brown added that although the meetings were well attended, this tended not to be by members of the public.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

10. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

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

- i. Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group held on 18 November 2022 and 15 December 2022 - **APPROVED**;
- ii. City of Inverness Area Committee held on 24 November 2022 - **NOTED**;
- iii. Inverness East Sports Facilities Working Group held on 15 December 2022 - **APPROVED**; and
- iv. Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee held on 23 January 2023 - **APPROVED**.

11. Exclusion of the Public Às-dùnadh a' Phobail

The Committee **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

12. Inverness Common Good Fund – Sites and Premises Transaction Report Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis – Aithisg Gnothachais Làraich is Thogalaichean

There had been circulated to Members only Joint Report No CIA/11/23 dated 1 February 2023 by the Head of Development and Regeneration and the Property Manager (Estates).

Following discussion, the Committee **NOTED** the recommendations as detailed in the report.

The meeting ended at 3.10pm.

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Thursday 23 March 2023 at 2.00pm.

Present:

Mr C Aitken	Ms E Knox
Mr C Ballance	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr I Brown	Mr A MacKintosh
Mr M Cameron	Mr R MacKintosh
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair	Ms K MacLean
Mr A Christie	Mr D Macpherson
Mr D Fraser	Mrs B McAllister
Mr K Gowans	Mrs M Reid
Mr A Graham	Mrs T Robertson
Mr D Gregg	Mr A Sinclair

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager, Communities and Place
Ms F Cameron, Programme Manager, Economy and Infrastructure
Ms F Hepburn, Project Officer - Community Regeneration, Economy and Infrastructure
Mrs L Dunn, Joint Democratic Services Manager, Performance and Governance
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer, Performance and Governance

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to Committee.

Mr I Brown in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr B Boyd, Mrs H Crawford and Mrs J Hendry.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

The Committee **NOTED** the following Transparency Statement:-

Item 3: Mr A Christie

3. Community Regeneration Fund (CRF)– Assessment of Applications Maoin Ath-bheothachadh Coimhearsnachd – Measadh Iarrtasan

Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item as he had a connection to several of the individuals involved in Item 3 of the agenda. However, having applied the objective test, reviewed his position in relation to the item and any personal connection, he did not consider that he had an interest to declare.

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/12/23 dated 14 March 2023 by the Depute Chief Executive.

During discussion, Members raised the following main points:-

- in relation to the Highland Coastal Communities Fund (HCCF), the Mum's on Wheels project be awarded the full amount requested of £7,610 and the Crown Connects project be awarded the remaining amount of £4,251.67. By agreeing this proposal, applicants would remain able to hold an event to promote social inclusion in the whole community;
- confirmation was sought and provided that the HCCF was available for wards connected to the coastal area;
- clarification was sought and provided that the HCCF had been publicised and the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee, the minutes of which had been submitted to the City of Inverness and Area Committee on 13 February 2023, had reviewed the Expressions of Interest received to determine whether applicants should be invited to submit a full application to the City of Inverness and Area Committee for determination;
- a proposal that as Whin Park was a long term investment project for the City, which might well require to be delivered in phases, over three to four years, a reduced grant should be awarded to the Whin Park Project. This would then enable the Committee to award the other applicants the grants they had applied for in full;
- the above would include the Committee agreeing to encourage the Whin Park Project to reapply for funding to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee set for 5 June 2023 for Members consideration, should another round of appropriate funding be made available to the Committee for dissemination;
- confirmation was sought and provided that the Whin Park Project would not suffer any detriment as a result of the proposal to lower the level of award and the Ward Members were content with the proposal; and
- confirmation was sought and provided that consideration would be given to part of the Place Based Investment Funding for 2023/24 being allocated to each ward.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** all applications presented for funding and **AGREED**:

i. that CRF - HCCF funding be awarded as follows:-

- a. Velocity Cafe and Bicycle Workshop: Mums on Wheels Inverness - £7,610
- b. Crown Connects SCIO: Crown Connects with Ukraine – £4,251.67;

ii. CRF - Place Based Investment Programme funding be awarded as follows:

- a. Dalneigh Play Park: Dalneigh Play Park Project - £55,228.06
- b. South Kessock Residents Association: South Kessock Play Park - £55,000
- c. The Ledge: The Bouldering Centre of Excellence - £100,000
- d. The Elsie Normington Foundation: The Haven Centre Project - £80,669.30
- e. Inverness YMCA: Wheelchair Lift - £17,000
- f. Lovat Shinty Club: Create a new Community Area - £146,261.21
- g. Community Action Raigmore Estate: Purchase of shack - £20,000
- h. Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust: Improved pathways project - £20,000
- i. Highland Council: Whin Park Refurbishment – £68,162*

- iii. the Whin Park Project be encouraged to reapply for funding to the next scheduled meeting of the City of Inverness Committee on 5 June 2023 for Members consideration should another round of appropriate funding be made available to the Committee for dissemination; and
- iv. that consideration be given to part of the Place Based Investment Funding for 2023/24 being allocated to each ward.

The meeting ended at 2.15pm.

** Addendum – subsequent to this meeting, it was clarified that the balance of the Fund remaining was £68,161.43 and consequently this was the sum awarded to the Whin Park Refurbishment project.*

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in the 2nd Floor Committee Room, Inverness Town House, on Monday, 27 February 2023 at 2pm.

Highland Council:

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair
Mrs J Hendry
Mrs M Reid
Mrs K MacLean

Officials in Attendance:

Mr A Gunn, Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place
Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

Mrs Campbell-Sinclair in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Mr R MacKintosh.

2. Exclusion of the Public

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

3. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated and were **NOTED** the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 15 December 2022.

It was clarified and **NOTED** that Mrs Kate MacLean had been formally appointed to the Working Group by the City of Inverness Area Committee on 26 September 2022 and that this had not been reflected in the minutes of the 15 December 2022.

5. 23/24 Events Programme

The Inverness City Area Manager updated Members on the plans for delivery of the Events and Festivals Programme and the potential events programme, noting the outcome of the City of Inverness Area Committee on 13 February at which the ICGF Budget for 23/24 had been agreed.

Following a brief recap of the 2022-23 programme and budget, seven options for the 2023-24 programme were outlined.

Issues raised during discussion included the following:

- it was hoped that sponsorship could be raised for the Red Hot Highland Fling (RHHF) 2023, noting that the events budgets was significantly lower for 2023-24;
- considerable discussion took place on the pros and cons of charging a booking fee for the RHHF, with key issues including safety, crowd control, affordability in the midst of a cost of living crisis, upholding the principles of the common good fund, preventing the uptake of free tickets that were not used, and raising funds to provide an improved event. Various booking charge fees were considered and the difference between value for money and affordability was discussed, as was the possible merit of a donation or 'pay it forward' system. It was proposed that if sufficient sponsorship was obtained, then a booking fee might not be required. Any decision on charging a booking fee was likely to set a precedent for future years;
- information was sought and provided on the cost of the Botanics event in 2022;
- while some people were known to be against a bonfire because of climate change, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service had indicated the important role the public bonfire played in the prevention of people having bonfires at home, and the resultant accidents that occurred;
- hosting two separate Hogmanay events, one for families in the afternoon, and another for adults in the evening, was considered but the infrastructure requirements were likely to be too challenging;
- income from vendors should be maximised;
- the popularity of the Highland Games in July was very dependent on weather and would impact on the available budget for other events;
- It was suggested that third-party funding sources could be followed up for events, including from the Scottish Government ;
- other events, including an evening event before or after the Highland Games, to raise additional funds were proposed and discussed; and
- .

The Working Group **AGREED** the following actions:

- to take forward for further consideration Option 2, which included the Highland Games, the Bonfire, and the RHHF, but did not include the Botanics;
- the Inverness Highland Games would be commissioned to take place on Saturday 15 July 2023.
- Preparations would be made for Red Hot Highland Fling and Civic Bonfire with confirmation oof arrangements and commissioning of the events taking place after the delivery of the Inverness Highland Games.
- to delegate powers to the City Area Manager, in consultation with the Provost, to source potential acts for the RHHF, then put together a package to attract sponsors. Depending on the success of this, a future decision would be taken on the need to charge a booking fee. Consideration would also be given to offering sponsors the chance to fund the Botanics event;
- a media message would be prepared in relation to the Highland Games going ahead on 15 July 2023 and discussion undertaken with the Highland Games Committee, as well as with the management for the Games, once they were

- commissioned, on the detail of the event; and
- consideration would be given to holding an evening event before or after the Highland Games to raise additional funds to bolster the budget, noting that it was significantly reduced for 2023-24.

6. Budget – Update – 2023/24

Once the events programme has been confirmed, reports on programmed spend would be taken to future meetings of the Working Group.

Members **NOTED** the information provided.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Members **NOTED** that the date of the next meeting would be Thursday 13th April 2023 at 2pm and **AGREED** to hold an additional meeting at 12pm on 23 March 2023 to consider progress with the actions detailed at Item 5.

The meeting ended at 3.35pm

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in Committee Room 2, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, on Thursday, 23 March at 12pm.

Highland Council:

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair
Mrs J Hendry
Mrs M Reid
Mrs K MacLean
Mr R Mackintosh

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

Also in Attendance:

Ms K Rait, Events Manager, Highland Games
Mr A Rawlinson, Visit Inverness Loch Ness
Mr C Kershaw, Eastgate Centre
Ms R Bell, Eden Court
Mr A Dick, Highland Games Committee

Mrs Campbell-Sinclair in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

There were none.

2. Exclusion of the Public

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

3. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated and were **NOTED** the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 27 February 2023.

5. 23/24 Events Programme

The Inverness City Area Manager updated Members on the plans for delivery of the Events and Festivals Programme, with a focus on preparations for the

Highland Games.

During discussion, the following issues were raised;

- a summary was provided of preparation for the Highland Games, including traders, tentage, security, traffic management, pipe band, funfair, website, social media, sponsorship, and gaelic elements;
- good weather and high attendance would reduce the net cost of the Games and increase the budget for other events later in the year;
- tickets would be sold via a link on the website and publicised through social media, with no increase in ticket price from 2022;
- a variety of ideas for the Games were proposed for further consideration, including:
 - the provision of corporate hospitality;
 - evening concerts or other forms of entertainment to make use of the tentage, including possible coordination with Eden Court's Under Canvas programme;
 - marketing opportunities for local businesses;
 - advertising of the Games in the Eastgate Centre;
 - the involvement of children, for example choirs or musical groups;
 - providing a mini football academy;
 - other family activities such as mobile climbing walls and zorbing;
 - an activity / active travel trail from the city centre to the Games, or other forms of city centre entertainment or publicity to widen awareness of the Games;
 - a live feed or semi-professional video footage of the event to put online;
 - a highland or mass dancing event;
 - the involvement of the armed services demonstrating their services, for example parachuting into the event from a rescue helicopter; and
 - advertising local tourist attractions at the event.

Members **NOTED** the progress of the event planning and in particular, plans for the delivery of the Inverness Highland Games, and **AGREED** that the additional suggestions for the Highland Games would be considered, with particular regard to budget constraints, outwith the meeting by the Inverness City Area Manager in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group, and viable options would be presented at the next meeting.

6. Budget – Update – 2023/24

Once the events programme has been confirmed, reports on programmed spend would be taken to future meetings of the Working Group.

Members **NOTED** the information provided.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Members **NOTED** that the date of the next meeting will be Thursday 13 April 2023 at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 12.55pm.

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in 2nd Floor Committee Room, Inverness Town House, on Thursday, 13 April 2023 at 2pm.

Highland Council:

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair
Mrs J Hendry
Mrs M Reid
Mrs K MacLean
Mr R Mackintosh

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

Also in Attendance:

Ms K Rait, Events Manager, Highland Games
Mr M Smith, Manager, Inverness BID
Ms R Bell, Eden Court
Ms S Armitage, Eden Court
Ms E Harrison, Visit Inverness Loch Ness

Mrs Campbell-Sinclair in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Exclusion of the Public

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

3. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated and were **NOTED** the Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 23 March 2023.

5. 23/24 Events Programme

The Highland Games Events Manager updated Members on the progress for the delivery of the Inverness Highland Games on 15th July, including the following issues:

- website and promotion progress;

- attractions including the Stoltman Brothers, A Taste of the Highlands tent, feasibility for a 5km fun run, outdoor market area, and discussions about a Clans Tent;
- Corporate Hospitality;
- Sponsorship Packages;
- Security; and
- the Site Plan.

During discussion the following issues were considered:

- the City Area Manager would circulate vendor and sponsorship packs to Members of the Working Group, to facilitate Members contacting organisations to seek possible sponsorship. A list of all events which could be sponsored should be included in the packs. The possibility of tying in corporate hospitality and sponsorship should be explored;
- construction work on the new building at Bught Park was not due to start until after the Games;
- the event/s planned for the Friday, and possibly the Saturday, evening would take place in the larger market tent, which had capacity to be extended from approximately 10 tables of ten to 15 tables of ten, including for corporate hospitality. Catering discussions were underway and information on possible performers or DJs for a disco would be circulated to Members for comment prior to a delegated decision being taken by the City Area Manager in consultation with the Provost. Discussions were underway with Eden Court to ensure evening events at the Games were not in direct competition with Under Canvas events;
- it was suggested that children's activities could be coordinated and / or publicised with similar events at Eden Court planned for later in the summer;
- discussion took place on ticket price structure with consideration being given to providing family or group discounts. On balance, having considered issues such as discrimination against one parent families when offering family tickets for two adults plus children, and the complexities that would arise from offering cheaper child, or other discounted tickets, it was felt by all that a flat charge of £10 for everyone over the age of five, as planned, was preferable;
- consideration was given to having chargeable photos, or other chargeable activities, but it was felt important to avoid too many additional chargeable activities;
- a risk assessment was being undertaken to ascertain how many people could participate in the 5km 'colour fun run', with staggered starting times being likely;
- consideration could be given to providing tickets packages with accommodation providers in the immediate vicinity;
- the website was due to go live on 30 April 2023 and a mock-up version of it was shown to the Working Group;
- further issues considered important included no vendor being in an inaccessible or hidden location, the funfair being able to accept cash-free payments, and there being a potable water source for people to refill water bottles;
- the hire costs of indoor market areas and outside pitches was summarised. A limited number of charity places would be available. Applications would be invited with a deadline of 8 May, and thereafter assessed to ensure an

- appropriate mix of vendors and stalls were provided; and
- plans for the delivery of the remainder of the Events and Festivals Programme would be considered after the Games.

Members **NOTED** the progress of the event planning.

6. Budget – Update – 2023/24

Once the events programme had been confirmed, reports on programmed spend would be taken to future meetings of the Working Group.

In relation to the Highland Games, the current estimation was for a total cost of £64,679.90, which was an improvement on the previous year, though might not be the final figure. Income projections would be provided in due course.

Members **NOTED** the information provided.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Members **NOTED** that the date of the next meeting would be Thursday 25 May 2023 at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 3.10pm.

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held in Committee Room 3, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Monday 6 March 2023 at 12.00 noon

Present:

Mr C Aitken (Teams)

Ms K MacLean

Mr C Ballance

Mr D Macpherson (Teams)

Mr M Cameron (Teams)

Mrs E McAllister

Mr A Graham

Mrs M Reid

Mrs I MacKenzie

In attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager (Teams)

Mr S Taylor, Civic and Facilities Team Leader

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

Miss M Murray, Interim Principal Administrator, Performance and Governance Service

Mr A Graham in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair and Mr A Sinclair.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the following Declaration of Interest:-

Item 4: Mrs E McAllister

3. Exclusion of the Public

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

4. Requests for Financial Assistance 2022/23

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/05/23 dated 22 February 2023 by the Inverness City Area Manager. Copies of the applications and supporting documentation had been made available via SharePoint.

Following detailed discussion on the merits or otherwise of each application, during which clarification was sought and provided on a number of points, the Sub-Committee determined the applications for financial assistance as follows:-

Applications up to £5,000

Applicant: Highland Food and Drink Trail Ltd/Inverness Cathedral

Project/activity: Eat & Peace at Inverness Cathedral

Total amount applied for: £3,168.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

Declaration of Interest: Mrs E McAllister declared an interest in the following application on the basis that a close family member played for Balloan Football Club and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, left the meeting while the application was being discussed.

Applicant: Balloan Football Club

Project/activity: Castello De Vide & Caldes-Da-Rainha International Football Tournaments

Total amount applied for: £5,000.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

Applications for Conference Support

Applicant: 2B DMC UK Ltd

Project/activity: Maritz Global Events – Edward Jones Tap 1 Incentive Programme

Total amount applied for: £9,600.00

Decision: Following a vote, **APPROVED** the application subject to the organisers allowing senior Council staff the facility to make 2 hours' worth of presentations about the value of investing in the Highlands.

Mr A Graham, seconded by Mrs E McAllister, **moved** that the application be approved.

As an **amendment**, Mr C Ballance, seconded by Mrs I MacKenzie, moved that the application be approved subject to the organisers allowing senior Council staff the facility to make 2 hours' worth of presentations about the value of investing in the Highlands.

On a vote being taken, there were four votes for the **motion** and five votes for the **amendment**, with no abstentions. The **amendment** was therefore **carried**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr A Graham, Mr D Macpherson, Mrs E McAllister, Ms M Reid.

For the Amendment:

Mr C Aitken, Mr C Ballance, Mr M Cameron, Mrs I Mackenzie, Ms K MacLean.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to determine the applications for up to and including £10,000 as detailed above; and
- ii. **NOTED** the allocations made from the small grants budget of £75,000 and the larger grants budget of £200,000.

5. Inverness Museum and Art Gallery

There had been re-circulated an application together with additional supporting information from High Life Highland (HLH) in respect of the restoration of the “Battle of Culloden” painting. The painting originally had been going to form part of an exhibition at the V & A in Dundee but, unfortunately, the deadline for the display had been missed. However, HLH remained committed to the application and wished the Sub-Committee to consider confirming that the grant of £6,000 awarded at the Sub-Committee on 23 January 2023 could still be used for the restoration of the painting due to its importance to the community of the City and Area.

Following discussion, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** that the grant of £6,000 awarded at the Sub-Committee on 23 January 2023 could still be used for the restoration of the “Battle of Culloden” painting subject to the necessary match-funding being secured within 12 months.

6. Civic Hospitality Requests

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/06/23 dated 24 February 2023 by the Inverness City Area Manager which listed applications received for Civic Hospitality from the Inverness Common Good Fund. Copies of the applications and any supporting documentation had been made available via SharePoint.

Following detailed discussion on the merits or otherwise of each application, during which clarification was sought and provided on a number of points, the Sub-Committee determined the applications for Civic Hospitality as follows:-

Organisation: The Highland Council

Event: The Highland Council Staff Recognition Awards

Venue: Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness

Cost: £2,000

Decision: Following a vote, **REFUSED** the application on the grounds of the depletion of the Inverness Common Good Fund budget.

Mr A Graham, seconded by Mrs E McAllister, **moved** that the application be approved.

As an **amendment**, Mr C Ballance, seconded by Mrs I MacKenzie, moved that the application be refused on the grounds of the depletion of the Inverness Common Good Fund budget.

On a vote being taken, there were four votes for the **motion** and five votes for the **amendment**, with no abstentions. The **amendment** was therefore **carried**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr M Cameron, Mr A Graham, Mrs E McAllister, Ms M Reid.

For the Amendment:

Mr C Aitken, Mr C Ballance, Mrs I MacKenzie, Ms K MacLean, Mr D Macpherson.

Organisation: Waterloo Bowling Club

Event: 100th Anniversary Waterloo Bowling Club

Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Buffet)

Cost: £3877.13

Decision: **APPROVED**

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** that successful applicants would be responsible for their own costs and might be held liable for the whole costs of the event if it was cancelled due to their own act or omission;
- ii. **NOTED** that costs of Civic Events continued to increase beyond expected levels and decisions might need to be taken regarding the prioritisation of events to be supported; and
- iii. **AGREED** to determine the applications for Civic Hospitality as detailed above.

7. Recurring Events

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/07/23 dated 16 January 2023 by the Inverness City Area Manager which invited the Sub-Committee to consider approval in principle for recurring annual events.

Following discussion, during which clarification was sought and provided on a number of points, the Sub-Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** that the events highlighted in Appendix 1 of the report be removed from the list of recurring events; and
- ii. **APPROVED** the remaining events in principle and **AGREED** to delegate authority to the Inverness City Area Manager in consultation with the Chair of the Sub-Committee and the Provost to approve the necessary expenditure in 2023/24.

8. Town House Letting Charges

There had been circulated two schedules of letting charges, one for commercial and one for non-commercial activity, confirming the price to be charged, with effect from 1 April 2023, in the event of any lettable space in the Town House being used for anything other than Inverness Common Good Fund business.

Following discussion, during which it was confirmed that work was underway to promote the use of the Town House as a venue, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** the charging schedules, noting that power to do so rested with the Sub-Committee subject to the minutes being approved by the City Area Committee.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 15 May 2023 at 10.00 am.

The meeting concluded at 1.20 pm.

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held in Committee Room 3, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Monday 15 May 2023 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Mr C Aitken (Teams)

Mr C Ballance

Mr M Cameron

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair (Teams)

Mr A Graham (Chair)

Mrs I MacKenzie (Teams)

Ms K MacLean (Teams)

Mr D Macpherson

Mrs M Reid

In attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager

Ms S Murdoch, Common Good Fund Officer

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

Miss M Murray, Interim Principal Administrator, Performance and Governance Service

Mr A Graham in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf Mrs E McAllister and Mr A Sinclair.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the following Transparency Statements:-

Item 4: Mr A Graham and Mr D Macpherson

Item 7: Mr A Graham and Mr D Macpherson

Item 14: Mr A Graham and Mr D Macpherson

3. Exclusion of the Public

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

4. Requests for Financial Assistance 2022/23

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/08/23 dated 4 May 2023 by the Inverness City Area Manager. Copies of the applications and supporting documentation had been made available via SharePoint.

The Inverness City Area Manager explained that, as agreed by the City of Inverness Area Committee on 13 February 2023, the total grants budget for 2023/24 was

£161,000, a significant reduction on the previous year's budget of £275,000. £121,000 had been allocated to Poverty and Inequality with the remaining £40,000 being for General Grants. £216,000 had been allocated to City Vibrancy, and details of what this included had been set out in Appendix 1 of the report. Members would therefore also have to consider the appropriate budget category when determining the applications for financial assistance.

Members emphasised the need to be mindful of the reduced budget and how much funding the Sub-Committee was committing to at this stage in the financial year given it was possible the applications received might exceed the amount of funding available. In relation to funds committed in previous years which had not yet been drawn down, discussion took place on the Carse Outdoor Hub and the Inverness City Area Manager undertook to liaise with the applicant to establish the current position and report back to the next meeting. With regard to the Change Your World Conference 2022, the event had not taken place and the Inverness City Area Manager suggested he write to the applicant to confirm the grant had been withdrawn. In response to a query, it was confirmed that DWG stood for Donations Working Group, the former name of the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee, and this would be amended in the appendices for the next meeting.

Following discussion on the merits or otherwise of each application and the appropriate budget category, during which clarification was sought and provided on a number of points, the Sub-Committee determined the applications for financial assistance as follows:-

Applications up to £5,000

Applicant: Aulnaskiach Dell SCIO
Project/activity: Woodland Management Plan
Total amount applied for: £1,120.00
Decision: **APPROVED** (Poverty and Inequality)

Applicant: The Archie Foundation
Project/activity: Archie's Child Bereavement Service - Conference
Total amount applied for: £4,000.00
Decision: **APPROVED** (Poverty and Inequality)

Applicant: Chamber Music Tours Scotland
Project/activity: Inverness Piano Recitals
Total amount applied for: £5,000.00
Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £2,500.00 (General Grant)

Applicant: Relationships Scotland – Counselling Highland
Project/activity: Relationship counselling support project for clients in IV1 and IV3
Total amount applied for: £3,150.00
Decision: **APPROVED** in principle (Poverty and Inequality)

Members approved this application in principle subject to the Inverness City Area Manager liaising with the applicant to confirm there were strong parameters in place to ensure clients came from the postcode areas specified, how said clients would be accessed and to what extent the proposed work was already being carried out by other agencies. It was **AGREED** that the Inverness City Area Manager would liaise with Sub-

Committee Members by email to confirm whether they were content with the response prior to making the award.

Applicant: Highland Third Sector Interface
Project/activity: Growing Together
Total amount applied for: £4,500.00
Decision: **APPROVED** (Poverty and Inequality)

Members approved this application subject to clarification of the figures in section 1.9 of the application form and confirmation that a robust arrangement was in place to ensure ongoing maintenance of the project.

Applicant: Fraser Park Bowling Club
Project/activity: Maintenance to Fraser Park Bowling Club car park and health and safety maintenance to the paths
Total amount applied for: £1,624.00
Decision: **APPROVED** (Other Properties)

Applicant: Inverness Cathedral
Project/activity: Inspire Project
Total amount applied for: £5,000.00
Decision: **APPROVED** (Poverty and Inequality)

Applications £5,001 to £10,000

Applicant: Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis
Project/activity: Trim Trail
Total amount applied for: £10,000.00
Decision: **DECLINED**

Members declined this application on the grounds it would set a precedent which would not be sustainable.

Applicant: Highland Pride SCIO
Project/activity: Highland Pride Summer Event in the Northern Meeting Park
Total amount applied for: £10,000.00
Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £2500.00 and up to a maximum of £5,000.00 if required (Poverty and Inequality)

Whilst Members were supportive of the event, there were other funds available to support such events and it was therefore suggested that a minimum grant of £2500.00 be awarded and that up to a further £2,500.00 be made available if required in the event other funding applications were unsuccessful.

Applicant: The Highlanders' Museum (Queens Own Highlanders Collection)
Project/activity: Community Art Project – The British Indian Army
Total amount applied for: £8,531.00
Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £2500.00 (General Grant)

Applicant: Scottish Squash and Inverness Tennis and Squash Club
Project/activity: 2023 Springfield Scottish Squash Open
Total amount applied for: £9,500.00
Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £4750.00 (General Grant)

Applicant: M.ad Agency Ltd
Project/activity: Inverness Cocktail Week
Total amount applied for: £9,500.00
Decision: **DECLINED**

Members declined this application on the grounds of insufficient community benefit.

Applicant: The Camanachd Association
Project/activity: 2023 MacTavish and Camanachd Cup Finals
Total amount applied for: £8,800.00
Decision: **APPROVED**, in principle, a partial award of £7250.00 (General Grant)

Given the reduction in the grants budget, Members approved, in principle, a partial award of £7250.00 subject to access being made available to young people in the same manner as specified in previous applications.

Transparency Statements: the undernoted Members declared a connection to the following application but, having applied the objective test, did not consider that they had an interest to declare:-

Mr A Graham – as a season ticket holder at Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club

Mr D Macpherson – as a Member of Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club's Centenary Club

Applicant: Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club (ICTFC)
Project/activity: Scottish Cup Final – ICTFC v Celtic at Hampden Park on 3 June 2023 – hire of buses
Total amount applied for: £8,000.00
Decision: **APPROVED** a potential maximum of £8,000.00 (General Grant)

It having been queried whether there was any possibility of utilising Council buses to provide in-kind support/reduce costs, it was **AGREED** that the Inverness City Area Manager liaise with the Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure, Environment and Economy in that regard and circulate a proposal to Sub-Committee Members by email.

Applications over £10,000

Applicant: Flow Photofest
Project/activity: FLOW Photofest 2023 – International Photography Festival
Total amount applied for: £12,100.00
Decision: **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** a partial award of £6,000.00 (City Vibrancy)

Applicant: Highland Third Sector Interface
Project/activity: Café 1668 – Link Worker
Total amount applied for: £37,867.00
Decision: **DEFERRED**

Members deferred this application to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 5 June 2023 to allow the City of Inverness Area Manager to seek further information on funding.

Applicant: Flexible Childcare Services Scotland
Project/activity: Holiday Playscape for children with Additional Support Needs
Total amount applied for: £15,578.00
Decision: **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** that the application be **DECLINED**

Members were of the view that the application should be declined on the grounds it would set a precedent which would not be sustainable.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to determine the applications for up to and including £10,000 as detailed above;
- ii. **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee, at its meeting on 5 June 2023, that the applications for more than £10,000 be determined as detailed above;
- iii. **AGREED** that the Inverness City Area Manager establish the current position in respect of Carse Outdoor Hub and report back to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee;
- iv. **AGREED**, in relation to the Change Your World Conference 2022, that the Inverness City Area Manager write to the applicant to confirm that the grant had been withdrawn; and
- v. **AGREED** that any reference in the appendices to the former DWG (Donations Working Group) be updated to reflect the current name of the Sub-Committee.

5. Homologation Requests

The following applications had been approved by the Inverness City Area Manager in consultation with the Sub-Committee, subject to homologation at the next available Sub-Committee Meeting:-

a. Inverness Shinty Club

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the approval of a grant of £2,260.00 to Inverness Shinty Club for assistance towards 2023 Shinty activities to coincide with the school holidays. It was **NOTED** that this grant had been awarded from the 2022/23 budget.

b. Ness & Beaully Fisheries Trust

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the approval of a grant of £9,900.00 to the Ness & Beaully Fisheries Trust towards Salmon Netting Buyout. It was **NOTED** that this grant had been awarded from the 2022/23 budget.

c. Scottish Cup Semi Final

Following discussion, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to take a quarter page advert in the Press & Journal wishing Inverness Caledonian Thistle FC well in their semi-final match with Falkirk. It was **NOTED** that the cost for this advert was £275.00 and would be paid from the City Vibrancy Budget.

6. Evaluation Forms

Following discussion, during which the importance of the Evaluation Forms in terms of scrutiny was emphasised, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the Evaluation Forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects.

7. Civic Hospitality Requests

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/09/23 dated 2 May 2023 by the Inverness City Area Manager. Copies of the applications and any supporting documentation had been made available via SharePoint.

Following detailed discussion on the merits or otherwise of each application, the Sub-Committee determined the applications for Civic Hospitality as follows:-

Organisation: 19th Regiment Royal Artillery (The Scottish Gunners)

Event: Freedom of Inverness Parade

Venue: Inverness Town House

Cost: £9,363.75

Decision: **APPROVED**

Transparency Statements: the undernoted Members declared a connection to the following application but, having applied the objective test, did not consider that they had an interest to declare:-

Mr A Graham – on the basis that he had met with the applicant to discuss the application. However, this was a courtesy that would be extended to any applicant if circumstances required. Whilst the applicant was known to him, he had not undertaken any work for him and was not an associate in any way.

Mr D Macpherson – on the basis that he knew of the applicant, having supplied him with vehicles for his business a number of years ago.

Organisation: The Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation

Event: 100th Anniversary of the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation

Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Dinner)

Cost: £4,500.35

Decision: **APPROVED**

Organisation: Northern Meeting Piping Trust

Event: Northern Meeting Competitions

Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Buffet)

Cost: £4,409.98

Decision: **APPROVED**

Organisation: British Curling Supplies
Event: World Curling Hall of Fame
Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Buffet)
Cost: £6,323.20
Decision: **APPROVED**

Organisation: Camanachd Association
Event: Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup Final – Post Match Reception
Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Buffet)
Cost: £4,767.30
Decision: **APPROVED**

Organisation: Poppy Scotland
Event: 2023 Scottish Poppy Appeal Reception
Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Buffet)
Cost: £2,999.50
Decision: **APPROVED**

Organisation: The Scottish Embassy (Branch) of Rouen-based Wine & Food Fraternity
Event: International Grand Chapter (Induction Ceremony)
Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Reception)
Cost: £2,292.60
Decision: **APPROVED**

It was further **AGREED** that the applicant be requested to invite local hoteliers and members of the catering fraternity to the event.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** that successful applicants would be responsible for their own costs and might be held liable for the whole costs of the event if it was cancelled due to their own act or omission;
- ii. **NOTED** that costs of Civic Events continued to increase beyond expected levels and decisions might need to be taken regarding the prioritisation of events to be supported; and
- iii. **AGREED** to determine the applications for Civic Hospitality as detailed above.

8. Homologation of Civic Hospitality Requests

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decisions to award the following Civic Hospitality requests:-

- Civic Dinner/accommodation in recognition of the work undertaken for the Proclamation - £759.80
- Police Scotland PSYV Awards - £2,630.98
- Visit by Spanish Delegation - £1,791.44

9. Free Hall Lets

Following discussion, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the following free hall lets:-

- Inverness Interfaith Group Event – 24 January 2023 - £300.00
- James Attwood Memorial Lecture – 10 November 2022 - £300.00

10. Civic Gifts

Following discussion, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the purchasing of civic gifts totalling £312.00.

11. Common Good consultation on the proposal to dispose, by lease, and change the use of the area of land adjacent to 17 Longman Drive, Inverness

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/10/23 dated 2 May 2023 by the Common Good Fund Officer.

Detailed discussion took place, both on the consultation process and the area of land that was the subject of the current consultation, during which information was sought and provided on a number of points.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the steps taken resulting in the commencement of the current consultation;
- ii. **NOTED** the process to be followed during the consultation process;
- iii. **AGREED** that Sub-Committee approval be sought, by email, to commence future Common Good consultations;
- iv. **AGREED** that the outcome of the current consultation and future Common Good consultations be presented to the Sub-Committee for consideration to enable it to make a recommendation to the City of Inverness Area Committee; and
- v. **AGREED** that the points raised in respect of the area of land that was the subject of the current consultation be investigated and Sub-Committee Members notified accordingly.

12. Victorian Market

- i. The Sub-Committee was asked to consider a contribution from the Other Properties budget to festoon lighting being added to Market Lane to enhance the entrance to the Victorian Market.

Given that the two other principal proprietors who used the lane would benefit, the Sub-Committee **APPROVED** a contribution of no more than one third of the costs, noting that the total contribution was not expected to exceed £5k.

- ii. The Sub-Committee was asked to consider the purchase and installation of new photos to be placed within the archways on the main arcade, replacing a number of existing photos so as to depict a more accurate historical record of the Market and City Centre.

The Sub-Committee **APPROVED** the proposal, the funding to be drawn from the Market Maintenance budget, noting that the total project cost was not expected to exceed £5k.

It was further **AGREED** that consideration be given to one of the frames relating to the future rather than the past.

13. Fraser Park and Planefield Road Bowling Clubs

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** a decision taken by the Inverness City Area Manager to authorise the installation of two access ramps, one at each of the above Bowling Clubs, as a health and safety requirement at a total cost of £13,278.00 to be drawn from the Other Properties budget.

14. Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club – Scottish Cup Final

Transparency Statements: the undernoted Members declared a connection to this item but, having applied the objective test, did not consider that they had an interest to declare:-

Mr A Graham – as a season ticket holder at Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club

Mr D Macpherson – as a Member of Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club’s Centenary Club

- i. The Council had been approached by a number of media organisations with potential opportunities to support goodwill advertising and the Inverness City Area Manager sought Members’ views in that regard, noting the current economic climate.

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** not to support goodwill advertising on the grounds that the money would be better spent assisting people to travel to the match.

- ii. The Sub-Committee **APPROVED** a lease to Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club, at a peppercorn rent, of one of the vacant units in the new Food Hall for promotional activities in the run up to the Scottish Cup Final on 3 June 2023.

On the point being raised, the Inverness City Area Manager confirmed that he would be liaising with Corporate Communications regarding appropriate publicity.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 7 August at 10.00 am.

The meeting concluded at 3.25 pm.

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness East Sports Facilities Working Group** held in Council Headquarters, Inverness on Tuesday, 21 March 2023 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Highland Council:

Mr I Brown
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair
Mr K Gowans
Mr D Gregg (remote)
Mrs E McAllister
Mr R MacKintosh
Mr D Macpherson
Mrs M Reid

Officials in Attendance:

Mr M MacLeod, Interim Depute Chief Executive
Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager, Communities and Place
Mrs O Bayon, Committee Officer, Performance and Governance

Also in Attendance:

Mr A Jones - Alan Jones Associates

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

3. Minutes of last meeting

There were circulated, for information, the Minutes of the last meeting of the Working Group held on 15 December 2022, the terms of which were **NOTED**.

4. Exclusion of the Public

The Working Group **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

5. Inverness East Sports Facilities Study

There had been circulated to Members only draft Inverness East Sports Facilities Study. Mr Alan Jones, who had been commissioned to prepare the Feasibility study gave a presentation on the draft Study.

During discussion the following comments were raised:-

- whilst Members supported the proposal of an Inverness East Sports Facility (IESF), concern was raised regarding sourcing the needed capital investment;
- whilst acknowledging the complexities around sourcing capital funding, appreciation was expressed that the Highland Council had a project brief to refer to and discuss with other organisations such as Sport Scotland. In addition, the project brief could be used to pitch to investors for additional funding;
- it was queried if sufficient car parking provision would be available for the number of potential IESF users. In this regard it was confirmed that the HC had proposed £200k for car parking;
- it was felt that funding from Developer Obligations should be looked into for further advancement, such as a potential increase in rates;
- reference was made to the Common Good Fund as a potential source of funding, especially as the project was for the common good, and contributions had been granted for previous projects;
- any new facility development would be required to comply with the HC net zero carbon emissions targets;
- it was queried if a consultation process had taken place with the University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI). In addition, it was also queried if UHI could access sources of funding for the project;
- it was recognised that the IESF would be part of a Highland sports strategy and the project would not just be constructed in isolation;
- the proposed facility could bring more people into the area who wished to seek careers in sports;
- in answer to queries it was confirmed that only smaller scale funding opportunities were currently available such as the Scottish Community Landfill Fund; and
- it was highlighted that energy costs to heat and maintain a swimming pool had risen by 200%.

Thereafter, the Working Group thanked Mr Jones for his presentation and **NOTED** the Inverness East Sports Facilities Feasibility Study.

The meeting ended at 2:45 p.m.