

Agenda Item	7
Report No	ERA-16-23

Highland Council

Committee: Easter Ross Area Committee

Date: 7 August 2023

Report Title: Invergordon Common Good Fund – Quarter 1 Monitoring Report 2023/24

Report By: Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the Quarter One monitoring statement for the Invergordon Common Good Fund against the budget set for 2023/24.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 This report asks Members to scrutinise and note:

- the Quarter 1 monitoring statement for the Invergordon Common Good Fund;
- Note the update on current Invergordon Common Good issues.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource implications:** The quarter one monitoring statement highlights predicted income and expenditure against the budget agreed. Both are on target.
- 3.2 **Legal implications:** The application of funds will fall within the competency guidelines set out both in statute and in common law in relation to Common Good Funds. Additionally, through the governance being applied by the Finance Service, funds will remain compliant with all financial regulations. Any disposal of Common Good assets has and will be taken forward within the framework of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.
- 3.3 **Community impacts** (Equality, Poverty and Rural): due to the lack of income there is no community grants budget. There are no other equality, poverty or rural implications as a result of the report.
- 3.4 **Risk implications:** As noted previously to this committee, before considering sale of the Bouchardon Bust it is critical that the wider implications of any such sale are considered. If

sale is likely to be considered unfavourably this could result in some significant heritage funders not supporting funding to the Highland Council as a whole. This could have significant implications for the wider Highland Council, and this will be required to be considered as part of any options appraisal on the potential for sale.

3.5 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever, Gaelic implications:** None

4. **Quarter 1 Monitoring Statement**

4.1 A monitoring statement showing transactions to the end of June 2023 against budget and estimated year end position is attached at **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Income

- Invergordon Town Hall is rented to Highlife Highland at a rent of £3,500 for 2023/24. This rent will be received later in the year.
- A small amount of income in the form of interest on revenue balances is expected in the 4th quarter.

4.3 Expenditure

- There is a small property budget set aside for minor repairs and other property costs. No spend has been incurred as yet.
- There will also, in due course, be charges relating to the costs of the Common Good Fund Officer which is budgeted for.

5 **Current Common Good Issues**

5.1 Invergordon Town Hall

In February 2022 Members agreed to recommend to Highland Council that the Town Hall be disposed of by sale following a second disposal consultation under the Community Empowerment Act. This was agreed and following that, Sherriff Court approval for such a sale was granted on 31 May 2022.

The property was marketed for sale and during the course of that marketing, a proposal was received from Invergordon Naval Museum and Heritage Centre for an asset transfer for the property. At the East Ross Area Committee in May 2023, Members agreed to pause the sale process for a 12 month period to allow time for the Invergordon Naval Museum and Heritage Centre's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) request to be completed and processed. At present the assessment of the CAT is in process. Once complete, the request will be considered at the next CAT Board with the officer recommendation then reported for consideration by the East Ross Area Committee as required.

5.2 Bouchardon Bust

In February 2022 Members agreed that work should commence on an options appraisal to consider the potential sale of the Bouchardon Bust and the creation of a financial sum for the Invergordon Common Good Fund. Initial discussions took place with a representative of Sotheby's to obtain specialist advice and information, given the nature of the asset involved. Detailed information will be compiled, when resources allow, into a full report to be brought before a future meeting of Easter Ross Area Committee.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place

Date: 10 July 2023

Authors: Helen Ross, Senior Ward Manager, CSER
Jackie McLaughlin, Principal Accounting Technician

**Invergordon Common Good - Quarterly Monitoring
Period to June 23**

	Actual to date £	Budget £	Estimated Outturn £	Variance £
Income				
Rents	-	3,500	3,500	-
Interest and investment income	-	300	300	-
Total Income	-	3,800	3,800	-
Expenditure				
Staff Costs	-	1,100	1,100	-
Property costs	-	2,000	2,000	-
Administration charges	-	100	100	-
Total Expenditure	-	3,200	3,200	-
Income less Expenditure	-	600	600	-
Unaudited Usable Reserves 2022/23		£82,050		
Estimated outturn for 23/24		600		
Estimated Usable Reserves 2023/24		£82,650		