

## The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on 27 May 2024 at 10.00 am.

### **Present:**

Mr C Ballance	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr B Boyd	Mr R MacKintosh
Mr I Brown (remote)	Mr A MacKintosh
Mr M Cameron	Ms K MacLean
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair (remote)	Mr D Macpherson
Mr A Christie	Mrs B McAllister
Ms H Crawford	Mr D McDonald
Mr D Gregg	Mrs M Reid
Ms E Knox (remote)	Mrs T Robertson

### **In attendance:**

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager  
Mr G MacCormick, Senior Environmental Health Officer  
Ms F Cameron, Programme Manager, Planning, Infrastructure & Economy  
Ms L Mateer, Principal Housing Officer  
Mr L Macdonald, Repairs Manager (South)  
Mr M Mackay, Community Development Manager, Inverness & South  
Mr G Munro, Revenues Manager  
Mr K Forbes, Property Manager  
Mr C MacFarlane, Inverness Victorian Market Manager  
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager  
Mrs O Marsh, Committee Officer  
Mr M Nixon, Committee Officer

### **Also in attendance:**

Mr A Holden, Scottish Fire and Rescue

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

**As Mr I Brown was unable to attend in person, Mr C Ballance was in the Chair**

### **Preliminaries**

Prior to the commencement of formal business, the Chair welcomed Mr McDonald to his first meeting of the City of Inverness Area Committee. He also reminded Members this would be the last meeting of Mrs McAllister and, on behalf of the Committee, he paid tribute to her 17 years of service.

### **Business**

#### **1. Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence Gairm a' Chlàir agus Leisgeulan**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr D Fraser, Mr K Gowans, Mr A Graham, Mr J Hendry and Mr A Sinclair.

## **2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt/ Aithris Fhollaiseachd**

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

Item 6 – Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg  
Item 7 – Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg  
Item 8 – Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg  
Item 10 – Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg  
Item 12a – Mr A Christie  
Item 12b – Mr A Christie  
Item 14 – Mr A Christie

There were no Declarations of Interest.

## **3. Military division of The King's Birthday Honours Roinn Armailteach Urraman Co-là-breith an Rìgh**

The Committee **NOTED** that Captain Bartholomew Philip Lucas had been awarded the MBE, for his long devoted service to Army Cadets UK and the Young People of the Highlands, in the Military division of The King's Birthday Honours List 2023.

## **4. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Area Performance Report Seirbheis Smàlaidh is Teasairginn na h-Alba – Aithisg Coileanaidh Sgìreil**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/11/24 by the Local Senior Officer for Highland.

During discussion, the following points were raised: -

- a more detailed geographical break-down of the statistics on home fire safety visits was requested to establish in which areas the uptake was lower, noting that older people who lived alone were more vulnerable and might not be aware of the visits. This would be provided outwith the meeting;
- information was sought, and provided, on staffing issues in Cannich (where one candidate was about to start training) and in Drumnadrochit, where regular training and support was being provided from training officers and others. The distinction between officers on a full or reduced retainer was clarified and reference was also made to the joint mobilisation policy which facilitated a shared crew from different stations. Recruitment efforts in Drumnadrochit and Fort Augustus were summarised;
- advice as to the storage of electric bikes and their batteries was sought, and provided, and assurance was also provided that policy on battery storage plants was being developed by the SFRS legislative department; and
- it was clarified that a primary fire involved a building and that Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) statistics did not relate to domestic buildings.

The Committee **NOTED** the attached Area Performance Report.

## **5. Inverness Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) Action Plan Plana-gnìomha Sgìre Stiùiridh Càileachd Èadhair Inbhir Nis**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/12/24 by the Strategic Lead Environmental Health & Bereavement Services.

During discussion, and following a presentation, the following points were raised: -

- the success in improving air quality as detailed in the report was welcomed and should be publicised;
- clarification was sought, and provided, that Academy Street/Queensgate, Inverness, was the only area in Highland which had been subject to an AQMA Action Plan. Assurance was sought, and provided, that air quality would continue to be monitored through a Council strategy;
- information was sought on Electric Vehicle Charging Points but this was not within the remit of Environmental Health;
- the electrification of buses had positively impacted the air quality on Academy Street and efforts should be made to change the Council-owned buses to electric vehicles, with reference to the declared climate emergency. Attention should also be given to the type of buses being depicted on the Council's social media accounts. The Chair clarified that the redesign of Council buses should be directed to the Redesign Board;
- it was queried why some cities, such as London, Glasgow and Dundee, charged certain types of buses a fee to enter the city centre and it was explained this was because they were subject to a low emission zone as a result of exceeding government maximum levels of pollution, whereas Inverness was not;
- concern was voiced about other areas of Inverness which were thought to have poor air quality and these could be reported to Environmental Health for consideration, with information provided about portable monitoring equipment which could be used as and when appropriate. Real-time automatic monitoring took place in the Telford Street area of Inverness and could be viewed online. Further detail on this could be discussed outwith the meeting;
- information was sought, and provided, on monitoring efforts that took place around schools, including awareness raising of key issues such as having car engines idling for periods of time. Assurance was provided that all levels monitored outside schools had been significantly below the Scottish Government air pollutant criteria. It was requested that Millburn Academy be added to the action plan and that regular reports on air quality be provided to the Committee;
- noise as well as air pollution was of concern;
- there were free electric bike charging stations in Fort William and Fort Augustus and consideration should be given to arranging this for Inverness, with a possible location in the Victorian Market suggested; and
- Inverness's prosperity depended on good air quality.

At this juncture , Mr Christie indicated he wished to move an amendment as follows: "Our City Centre is key to the economic prosperity of our whole region. We recognise that the experience visitors, residents and workers enjoy whilst in the city is a key factor in achieving this prosperity. Therefore Committee agrees to hold a special meeting of the this committee prior to the summer recess so members can be updated and discuss "making Academy Street a place for everyone".

However, this amendment involved information relating to a current Application for Judicial Review and the Chair suggested a private briefing or workshop, instead of a formal meeting. This was declined by Mr Christie so the Chair deemed the amendment not competent.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the improvements to air quality in the city centre since the first publication of the Draft AQMA Action Plan for Inverness in 2016;

- ii. **APPROVED** the Inverness AQMA Action Plan with the 2024 action measures table;
- iii. **AGREED** to hold a private briefing for Members about projects impacting Academy Street.
- iv. **AGREED** to investigate the provision of a free electric bike battery charging facility in Inverness;
- v. **AGREED** to add Millburn Academy to the Action Plan for temporary air quality monitoring; and
- vi. **AGREED** to regular reporting of air quality issues to the Committee.

## **6. Environmental Health – Annual Report & Activity 2023/24 Slàinte Àrainneachdail – Aithisg Bhliadhnail & Gnìomhachd 2023/24**

**Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg made Transparency Statements in respect of this item in their capacity as a Non Executive Director and employee of NHS Highland respectively. However, having applied the objective test, reviewed their position in relation to the item and any personal connection, they did not consider that they had an interest to declare.**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/13/24 by the Strategic Lead Environmental Health & Bereavement Services.

During discussion, the following points were raised: -

- in response to a query about the 880 contaminated land screening service requests, it was explained these related to planning application verifications by scientific officers for issues such as contaminated land;
- information was sought, and provided, on policies around air filter replacements, for which there were many complex variables;
- in response to a query about public availability of catering establishment remedial notices, these were available online (Food Hygiene Information System) and showed if an establishment was subject to an improvement order. Catering facility enforcement was undertaken by the Health and Safety Executive;
- it would be helpful if some of the information in the report could be further broken down geographically;
- information was sought, and provided, on what enforcement action could be taken in relation to littering, especially around secondary schools, and dog fouling etc. A summary was provided of current enforcement policies and resources, including targeted intensive enforcement and education;
- concern was expressed about the numbers of abandoned vehicles and how their removal could be expedited. Issues included the strict definition of an abandoned vehicle which the Council was permitted to remove. Vehicles that remained in someone's ownership were dealt with through the DVLA. A report on this was due to be presented to the Communities and Place Committee;
- the prohibition order against shops in Inverness to prevent the sale of vapes to under-18s was welcomed;
- information was sought, and provided, on the number of staff available to administer the Short Term Let licences;
- it would be helpful if future reports could include comparison data from previous years, and benchmarking against other local authorities;
- it was queried whether traffic enforcement officers could be upskilled to also deal with litter offences. A summary was provided of the criteria required to prosecute littering offences;

- a more aggressive approach to enforcement, with a pilot area, was suggested to try to change culture around offenses;
- fly tipping was of concern, and joined up working between Environmental Health, Waste Management and Trading Standards was encouraged;
- dog fouling on beaches was concerning and a ban on dogs during the bathing season on popular beaches was proposed but was not thought likely to be possible;
- the Inverness FOG project, detailed in the report, to tackle the threat of fatbergs in Inverness city centre sewers was welcomed; and
- information was sought, and provided, on the increasing problem of rats in Inverness, with some being displaced by development along the A96. Attention was drawn to the responsibilities of home and landowners in this regard.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the current structure of the Environmental Health team;
- ii. the range and volume of work that was being undertaken locally by the team;
- iii. the Highland wide issues; and
- iv. the report format and content.

## **7. Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 Aithisg Coileanaidh Taigheadais – 1 Giblean 2023 gu 31 Màrt 2024**

**Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg made Transparency Statements in respect of this item in their capacity as Chief Officer and Board Member of Inverness, Badenoch and Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureau respectively However, having applied the objective test, reviewed their position in relation to the item and any personal connection, they did not consider that they had an interest to declare.**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/14/24 by the Executive Chief Officer Housing and Property.

During discussion, the following points were raised: -

- it would be helpful for total figures to be provided on rent arrears in future reports;
- there was potential for homelessness to increase due to the lifting of the legislative embargo on evictions and repossessions;
- there was concern that delays in re-lets due to spending controls might be causing unnecessary harm for individuals and families in emergency or temporary accommodation and there was a need to explore this matter in more detail at a future meeting. In response, it was explained a priority approach was taken to the re-let of empty properties taking account of individual or family circumstances;
- confirmation was sought, and provided, that Members would be given information on the delays caused by utility companies in relation to re-lets;
- an update was sought, and provided, on the challenges faced around the recruitment of trades. This included the action being taken to offer work experience and apprenticeships to young people and to promote more widely the packages and benefits available with the Council. A main issue continued to be that the Council could not compete with the hourly pay rate offered by the private sector;
- confirmation was sought, and provided, that there were currently around 6,100 applicants on the Highland Housing Register, the bulk of which were seeking a property in Inverness;
- in response to a query, it was confirmed that tenants were being actively contacted by the Service's housing teams to discuss if they wished to downsize. The Council also had a right sizing policy and some incentives were offered;

- further clarity was sought, and provided, that more one-bedroom properties were required in Inverness to meet current demand in relation to homelessness; and
- concern was expressed at the performance for emergency and non-emergency repairs, re-let times and rent arrears in Quarter 4 relative to the previous year and the plans to address this situation. In response, an explanation was provided on the challenges involved in achieving a balance between performance and affordability in terms of the available budget.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

**8. Community Asset Transfer Request – Fort Augustus Memorial Hall  
Iarrtas Gluasad So-mhaoin Coimhearsnachd – Talla Cuimhneachaidh Chille  
Chuimein**

**Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg made Transparency Statements in respect of this item in their capacity as a Non-Executive Director and employee of NHS Highland respectively. However, having applied the objective test, reviewed their position in relation to the item and any personal connection, they did not consider that they had an interest to declare.**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/15/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

The Committee **AGREED** the sale of Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus to Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Company for the sum of £40,000, based upon the terms set out in the report within paragraph 7.1.

**9. Community Regeneration Fund Assessment of Applications  
Measadh Iarrtasan Maoin Ath-bheòthachaidh Coimhearsnachd**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/16/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

The Committee **APPROVED** the application presented for a funding award from the Community Regeneration Fund as follows:

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Grant awarded</b>
Sea Cadets	Improvement works to facility including heating, electric and kitchen upgrades	£50,000

**10. Scheme for Winter Payments 2024/25  
Sgeama airson Phàighidhean Geamhraidh 2024/25**

**Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg made Transparency Statements in respect of this item in their capacity as Chief Officer and Board Member of Inverness, Badenoch and Strathspey Citizens Advice Bureau respectively. However, having applied the objective test, reviewed their position in relation to the item and any personal connection, they did not consider that they had an interest to declare.**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/17/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate which proposed to maintain the same arrangements for the Inverness Winter Payments Scheme for 2024/25 to reflect economic impacts within Inverness and surrounding area.

In discussion, it was advised that that the Inverness Benevolent Funds were not generally used for anything other than for the winter payments scheme. Also, similar to last year, it was suggested that a review take place at the City of Inverness and Area Committee on 18 November 2024 to gauge if there was any underspend in the Inverness Common Good Fund that could be reallocated to the Inverness Winter Payment Scheme. Further, there was a need to give better advice to the public on energy efficiency in homes and Officers undertook to look at what more assistance could be provided.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to provide an Inverness Winter Payments Discretionary Scheme for 2024/25 having regard to the financial support available from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Social Security Scotland (SSS) as set out in sections 6 and 7 of the report;
- ii. **AGREED** to accept applications from 1 December 2024 to 31 March 2025 inclusive;
- iii. **AGREED** to provide a budget of £0.200m for the 2024/25 Scheme noting that payments for Landward Areas would be sourced from available income within the Inverness Benevolent Funds first, with the ICGF being utilised for the Landward Areas, in the event that officers decide it financially prudent to do so;
- iv. **AGREED** to apply a Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase to the £106 award rate for 2023/24 in order to determine the 2024/25 single tier payment rate;
- v. **AGREED** to use the annual CPI of 4.2% (March 2024 rate), noting this would establish the 2024/25 award amount at £111 for eligible applicants;
- vi. **AGREED** that the criteria utilised for the 2023/24 scheme as set out in paragraphs 8.2 to 9.6 of the report shall be used as the basis for the 2024/25 Scheme;
- vii. **AGREED** this discretionary scheme was to be made available to residents in the City of Inverness and the Landward areas of the seven City Wards;
- viii. **NOTED** BACS payments were to be used for this discretionary scheme as this was the most secure method of payment for recipients of the payment and the Council alike; and
- ix. **AGREED** to re-review the Inverness Winter Payment Scheme at its meeting on 18 November, 2024 to look at repurposing any underspend in the Inverness Common Good Fund into an increased payment award for the Inverness Winter Payment Scheme.

## 11. Ward Discretionary Budget Applications Iarrtasan Buidseat fo Ùghdarras Uàird

The Committee **NOTED** that the following City of Inverness Ward Discretionary Budget applications had been approved since 5 February 2024:-

### 2023/2024

- **Ward 12**
- Kilmorack Community Council: Teanassie School ASN Room - £750
- Strathglass Community Council: Loch Ness and Affric National Park Consultation - £999

- Beaulieu Community Council for Beaulieu Community Trust: Drop in Sessions – Talks to Village Groups - £500
- Aird Community Trust: KCC Football Project - £4,000
- Aird Community Trust: Newtonhill Defibrillator - £500
- Glen Urquhart High School Parent Council: Interactive Display Screen for the Maths Department - £868.76
- Glen Urquhart Shinty Club: Shiny Memories Group - £100
- Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE) - £184

- **Ward 13**

- Active Schools Inverness High School: Winter Primary Football for Inverness High School Cluster - £1,299.38
- St Andrew's Cathedral: InSpire - £760
- Charleston Academy Community Complex: Gala Fun Day 2024 - £1,545
- Camanachd Association: Creating a tartan for Scotland's Community Sport - £500
- Central Primary School: Active Play Equipment - £992.34
- Muirtown Polycrub - £760
- Charleston Academy: Ocean Youth Trust Employability Voyage - £667.31

- **Ward 14**

- Active Schools Inverness High School - £2,598.77
- Rokzkool Academy - £1,400
- St Andrew's Cathedral: InSpire - £760
- Merkinch Community Centre: Room Hire - £21
- Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE) - £363.67

- **Ward 15 – None**

- **Ward 16**

- Crown Primary School: Literacy Project - £950
- Hilton Primary Parent & Friends: School Trip to Fairburn Activity Centre - £950
- Culcabock and Drakies Community Council: Contribution to Drakies Hall Improvement Works - £4559.50

- **Ward 17**

- Culloden Academy: Supporting the Inclusion of Free School Meals to Pupils - £1,250
- Culloden Academy: Supporting Families in Crisis - £750
- Project Linus UK – Inverness and Surrounds Sewing Group - £250
- Ardersier Primary School: Developing the Outdoors - £1,000
- Smithton Primary School: Transportation Support for P7 Outdoor Education Residential - £1,000
- Croy Primary Parent Council (CPPC): Christmas 2024 Pantomime Visit - £1,000
- Duncan Forbes Primary School: Outdoor Pioneers - £959.92
- Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE) - £1,776.08

- **Ward 19**

- Culloden Academy: Supporting the Inclusion of Free School Meals to Pupils - £1,250
- Culloden Academy: Supporting Families in Crisis - £750
- Cradlehall Primary School: School Residential Excursion 2024 - £1,950
- Inshes Library: Developing a Creative and Nurturing Community Space - £2,000
- SNAP: Cost of Living and Specialist Support - £5,067.96



## 2024/25

- **Ward 12**
  - Friends of Kilchuimen Academy: Senior Pupils (S5/6) New Common Room - £500
- **Ward 13**
  - Charleston Academy: Ocean Youth Trust Employability Voyage - £839.69
- **Ward 14**
  - South Kessock Residents Association: Play Park Opening - £1,350
- **Ward 15**
  - Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE) - £329.72
- **Ward 16**
  - Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE) - £329.72
- **Ward 17 – None**
- **Ward 19 – None**

In terms of Standing Order 9, with the consent of the Committee, item 12a had been taken after item 4 on the agenda.

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

### **a) Victorian Market and Inverness Town House Update Cunntas mun Mhargaidh Bhictòrianach agus Taigh Baile Inbhir Nis**

**Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as a Non-Executive Board Member of Inverness BID. 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/18/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place which provided an update on the progress made on the delivery and further development of two key assets of the Inverness Common Good Fund, the Victorian Market and the Town House.

A video promoting the Victorian Market was shown to the Committee and highlighted the many new businesses now in the market since completion of the redevelopment. There was an average of 6000 visitors per day and the aim was to support small businesses located there, so the Market was a must visit destination in the City centre and also a great benefit to the wider community. The video showed positive feedback on the transformation of the Market from some of the business owners.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- the team behind the transformation of the Victorian Market were congratulated for their work. Businesses were exceptionally busy and it was a vibrant and welcoming area to visit and shop;
- a plan was being worked on with Inverness College/UHI to bring the train back to the market;
- it was queried how the footfall to the Victorian Market was collated. Members were informed that a company had been hired to install cameras on the entrance doors to the market to count people entering. A further breakdown of footfall information would be provided to a future meeting;
- it was queried how the programme for music was funded and if this was to be an ongoing feature in the Market. In response it was explained that there was a budget set aside by the Committee for the music programme and this was part funded from contributions from businesses in the market, through their service charge;
- there were currently only 3 vacant units in the Market and this was evidence of the tremendous success of the redevelopment. However, due to constraints on energy supply, no further street food outlets were currently allowed and work was ongoing to identify other uses for these vacant units. It was confirmed that discussions were taking place with the energy supplier to bring at least one of the vacant units up to full power use. Also, working with the Council's energy team, the use of solar power was being investigated to increase energy supply and further information on this would be provided at a future meeting;
- concern was expressed that the electricity supply issue in the Market had not been considered in a more practical way as it would have been better to assess the electricity supply as the redevelopment took place. Further, battery storage should be considered if solar panels were to be introduced. The success of the redevelopment of the Market had been underestimated and, going forward, when projects were being planned, the aspirations should be much higher;
- improvements to heating, seating and provision of drinking water in the Market were highlighted. An information point was also proposed;
- the Stakeholder Group continued to play a key role and its focus going forward would be on the development of the action plan and ongoing work and support to the rest of the City centre;
- as part of the report on the Common Good Fund to the next meeting, comparative information would be provided on projections for the use of the Market since plans to redevelop it were first proposed in 2015 and up to the current period;
- in collaboration with Inverness College/UHI a new logo for the Town House was displayed. In terms of the cost of producing the logo, it was value for money and benefited students in the design of the logo. It had not been an easy design to create and the design was commended;
- the move out of the Town House had generated a saving of £370,000 to the Council, but was a loss of the same amount to the Inverness Common Good Fund. It was advised that work was ongoing to improve the letting of accommodation in the Town House but it was not yet at the stage where income was covering the operating costs of the building. By agreeing the recommendations in the report, this would be a significant step forward to raising more income; and

- a report on the work and costs involved in refurbishing the Town House following the Council's departure from it was requested. The Town House continued to be work in progress and the need to address the challenges around its condition would be covered in the recommended feasibility study into its future use.

In relation to the Victorian Market, the Committee:-

- NOTED** the progress in respect of the work agreed through the Victorian Market Action Plan since the last report to the City Area Committee and the success in the letting of all available Units in the Market;
- NOTED** the success of the marketing programme presented to the Committee as shown by the increase in footfall detailed in the report provided at Appendix 3 of the report.
- AGREED** that the current management arrangements continue for a further year, until May 2025, in order to consider what operating and management structures were required for both the Victorian Market and Town House;
- NOTED** that a further report would be presented to Committee in 2025; and
- NOTED** that comparative information would be provided on projections for the use of the Market since plans to redevelop it were first proposed in 2015 and up to the current period.

In relation to the Town House, the Committee:-

- NOTED** the work of the Estates Team to attract tenants into the rear part of the Town House; and
- AGREED** to instruct officers to prepare a Feasibility Study into the future use of the Inverness Townhouse which accounts:
  - for its status as a Civic building in the heart of the City
  - the need to undertake renovations of the interior which are respectful of its status
  - flexibility regarding the type of activity that can be undertaken subject to it being complimentary to the status and heritage of the Townhouse.
  - the need for the Council to achieve Best Value for the ICGF
- NOTED** third party contractors would be engaged to provide the Feasibility Study, the cost to be met from the ICGF Townhouse Future Planning budget with updates on the progress of the study being provided to the ICGF Sub-Committee. The Feasibility Study would be completed no later than December 2024.

**b) Grants Applications over £10,000  
Iarrtasán Tabhartais thar £10,000**

**Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as a Non-Executive Board Member of Inverness BID. 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/19/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place. A copy of supporting documentation had also been circulated as Booklet A.

The Committee considered the following grant applications and decided as follows:-

## 1. Poverty & Inequality Grant Applications

- i. Inverness Blitz – **AGREED** a grant of £16,000
- ii. UHI Inverness

The Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee had recommend refusal of a grant of £23,145 towards the Caring Conversations Project. The Sub-Committee felt that the project would be more appropriately funded from UHI core funding.

Mr B Boyd proposed an amendment to this decision as the project was about end of life issues, a neglected area in health and care communications. It disproportionately impacted those facing the cost of living crises. Bereavement in families affect everyone, young and old. The Caring Conservations Project was widely supported by the Member's ward constituents and was a worthy application. The project was led by the Highland Hospice with input from UHI and Highland Council. It was felt that the Sub Committee did not have all the information when making their decision as they had felt that there was not sufficient money available to approve the application. However there was sufficient funding for poverty and inequality applications. He suggested that a decision on this application for funding of £23,145 be deferred to allow resubmission of the application from the Highland Hospice, involving UHI, Highland Council and NHS Highland, specifically to clarify the deliverables, the applicability to the City of Inverness, emphasis on the benefits to target groups and work with the project team to clarify the application form and process.

The Committee **DEFERRED** a decision on this item to allow the resubmission of the application to the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub Committee.

- iii. UHI Inverness (Community Food Larder) - **REFUSED** a grant of £14,000 noting that there was insufficient community benefit and that it would set a precedent which would not be sustainable.

## 2. Conference Funding Applications

- i. Hands Up for Trad - **AGREED** a grant of £8,110.

## 3. Partnership Working Applications

- i. Visit Inverness Loch Ness - **AGREED** a grant of £20,000
- ii. Inverness BID/Visit Inverness Loch Ness - **NOTED** that there were insufficient funds remaining to consider this application.

## 4. Other Properties

- i. Inverness Sea Cadets – **AGREED** a grant of £20,000
- ii. Apex Scotland – **AGREED** a grant of £17,096

**13. Membership of Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee  
Ballrachd Fo-chomataidh Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis**

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr D McDonald, as put forward by the Scottish Liberal Democrats, to the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee.

**14. Minutes  
Geàrr-chunntas**

**Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as a Non-Executive Board Member of Inverness BID. 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.**

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

- i. City of Inverness Area Committee held on 24 February 2024 - **NOTED**;
- ii. Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group held on 23 February 2024 and 4 April 2024 – **APPROVED**; and
- iii. Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 22 April 2024- **APPROVED**.

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

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

There had been circulated to Members only Joint Report No CIA/20/24 by the Head of Economic Development & Regeneration and Property Manager – Estates.

The Committee **NOTED** the recommendations as detailed in the report.

The meeting concluded at 2.40 pm.