

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in Committee Room 1, Headquarters, Inverness on Friday, 28 June 2024 at 2pm.

Highland Council:

Mr I Brown
Mrs J Hendry
Mrs K MacLean

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Senior Community Development Manager Inverness & South
Ms A MacNeill, Senior Public Relations Officer, Performance and Governance
Mr M Nixon, Committee Officer, Performance and Governance

Also in Attendance:

Ms K Raite, Inverness Events Manager
Ms M Laws, Inverness BID Deputy Manager

Mrs Jackie Hendry in the Chair in the Provost's Absence

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were intimated for Cllr G Campbell-Sinclair and Cllr 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 involve 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 May 2024.

5. City Area Community Events Programme 24/25

The Senior Community Development Manager for Inverness & South and the Inverness Events Manager presented an update Members on the plans for the Community Events Programme for the period up until 31 March 2025 and beyond, including links being made with other City Centre stakeholders.

Members **NOTED** the information provided.

Highland Games

The following issues were presented:

- site plan and events;
- that a further catering provider had been procured, taking the total to four for the Evening Ceilidh;
- website and publicity;
- Evening Ceilidh, ticketing information - which had seen an increase on last year;
- entertainment, and that a further entertainer, King Axe throwing, would be in attendance;
- the location of the Provost for the opening ceremony of the Games;
- Games hospitality – that four paid tables had been confirmed so far;
- the VIP list for potential future sponsors of the Games;
- sponsorship; and
- budget summary.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- it was asked if the tables still available for the hospitality tent would be advertised on the Games' website and social media;
- that the £1000 saving on the food tender for the hospitality tent compared to last year was excellent news;
- Members sought clarification about if there would be space in the tent for Councillors. It was highlighted that Members would need to be reminded that their invitation was for the Highland Games and not the hospitality;
- it was asked if the social media presence would increase in the lead up to the Highland Games and if this would highlight the last chance to secure hospitality tables;
- it was queried when the start date for the set up at Bught Park would be and it was confirmed that Members could undertake a site visit if they so wished;
- clarification was sought and provided about when traders usually arrived before the Games;
- how the grass would be maintained within the big top tent; and if the big top tent would remain dry regardless of weather;
- Members enquired about the visibility of the ceilidh during the Games and whether it would feature in the programme or on posters. It was also queried if the ceilidh tickets could be sold in person;
- that posters advertising tickets for the ceilidh would be placed around the site and the town centre, with an emphasis on these being particularly visible towards the end of the Games;
- that the Council was not insured against the loss of funds due to inclement weather affecting the proceedings of the Highland Games;
- that every care was being taken to bring down expenses;
- it was noted that there had been a budget increase on last year due to extra infrastructure costs in relation to works being carried out at Bught Park and the introduction of the Ceilidh;
- it was raised that there had been no expenditure other than what was considered necessary, and all risks had been identified.

Bonfire Event

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- that provisionally the fireworks display had been booked;
- that proposed firework control zones would not influence the planned display, and may further enhance the evening for the public;
- that further conversation would take place about the Bonfire, and it was suggested that Members might reconvene to discuss this, given that the chair would need to be consulted on this issue;
- Members raised that it could be preferable to have more fire entertainers at the event as opposed to a large bonfire given the environmental cost;
- the bonfire itself decreases the risk of the public lighting their own Bonfires by encouraging their attendance as supported by Scottish Fire and Rescue Services;
- it may be preferable to host a drone display instead of fireworks, but this would be expensive and challenging to organise, further discussion would take place on this matter going forward;

- it was queried if the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service could play an active part in the display, such as a mimic rescue on an individual or similar;
- that this would be discussed in more detail, following the successful completion of the Highland Games.

An invitation was extended to Members to visit the Highland Games site before the event at 2pm on Friday 12 July.

It was noted that there was no intention to change the format of the Bonfire night and Fireworks however officers would assess options regarding the use of potential alternatives to a large Bonfire and report to the next meeting of the Working Group.

6. Budget – Update – 2024/25

Once the events programme had 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 next meeting is scheduled for 15 August 2024.

The meeting ended at 15:10pm