

Agenda Item 11i

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on 19 August 2024 at 10.00 am.

Present:

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

In attendance:

Mr D Haas, Senior Community Development Manager
Mr J MacLean, Bereavement Services Project Manager, Environmental Health & Bereavement Services
Ms R Robertson, Project Coordinator, Environmental Health & Bereavement Services
Mr S Grant, Senior Engineer, Roads & Infrastructure
Mr I Ross, Maintenance Technician, Environmental Health & Bereavement Services
Mrs L Dunn, Joint Democratic Services Manager
Mrs G MacPherson, Committee Officer
Mr M Nixon, Committee Officer

Also in attendance:

Chief Inspector J Hill, Area Commander (Inverness Area Command), Police Scotland
Mr C MacPherson, Chief Executive Officer Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport

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

Mr I Brown was in the Chair

Business

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

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr A Sinclair.

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

The Committee **NOTED** the following:

Declarations of Interest:

Item 12.d – Mr D McDonald

And the following Transparency Statements:

Items 5 and 7 – Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg

Items 10 and 12 – Mr A Christie

Item 12.d – Mr K Gowans

3. Recess Powers Cumhachdan Fosaidh

The Committee **NOTED** that the recess powers granted by the Council at its meeting on 27 June 2024 had not been exercised in relation to the business of the City of Inverness Area Committee.

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

The Committee **NOTED** that Retired Special Constable Francis John Sutherland (known as Iain Sutherland) had been honoured with an MBE in recognition of his service to the police force.

Thereafter, the Chair congratulated Megan Keith on being selected to compete in the 10,000m in the Olympics in Paris. He advised that she was an inspiration to all Highland athletes and showed what could be achieved and wished her well in her career and every success in future.

5. Police – Area Performance Summary Poileas – Geàrr-chunntas air Coileanadh Sgìreil

Mr A Christie and Mr D Gregg made Transparency Statements in respect of this item in their capacity as a Non-Executive Director of NHS Highland 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/21/24 dated 7 August 2024 by the Inverness Area Commander.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the City Leader thanked the Police for their work and attendance at the meeting, and referred to the helpful, regular themed meetings that were taking place with the Police, to which all Members of the Committee were welcome, with the next meeting scheduled for 23 September 2024;
- Members reported that some Community Councils had expressed disappointment that police officers no longer attended their meetings as a matter of course and assurance was provided that the Police Scotland committee report would be circulated to City and Area Community Councils. Police attendance at Community Council Forum meetings was highlighted;
- in order to provide reassurance to communities, information was sought and provided on work being undertaken to monitor and prevent the far-right demonstrations that some areas in the rest of the UK had been experiencing;

- information was sought on measures being taken to tackle shoplifting, including monitoring the various reasons for such thefts, such as for the reselling of goods, to fund addiction or poverty. Particular reference was made to rural shoplifting, which increasingly related to tourism, and the concerns of rural shopkeepers who would welcome advice from the Police on CCTV and other preventative measures;
- concern was expressed about fraud and theft against older and vulnerable people, particularly sophisticated online scams which could result in the loss of considerable amounts of money. It was thought these crimes could be under-reported due to people feeling embarrassed at having been tricked, and the relatively low rates of detection. While tackling online fraud was often a national or international initiative, prevention and education could be done at a local level and various options were suggested, including the Police undertaking visits to vulnerable people in their homes, possibly in conjunction with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and NHS Highland, and collaborating with third sector organisations that worked with vulnerable groups to provide information and education. Information was sought and provided on fraud prevention work undertaken with banks at a local level;
- information was sought and provided on initiatives being undertaken to tackle anti-social behaviour and vandalism, including in rural areas, and in conjunction with County Lines initiatives. This could be further discussed outwith the meeting;
- it was noted that the figures for sexual crimes were reducing, although still above the three and five year averages, and the improved trauma-informed approach being taken by Police officers was welcomed;
- attention was drawn to staffing numbers and current vacancies, with particular reference to Police visibility in rural areas, and an assurance was sought that Members would be kept updated on progress with recruitment;
- information was sought and provided on procedures for dealing with missing people, including work with social services and other agencies;
- in response to a query about CCTV systems in Inverness and on the Kessock Bridge, the Senior Community Development Officer explained that the Inverness CCTV system had been recently upgraded. Briefings on issues related to the Kessock Bridge had been provided to Members; and
- serious acts of vandalism against Hi-bike equipment in Inverness was the subject of an ongoing police investigation and would be reported on in due course.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the:-

- i. progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2023–2024 Year 1 attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 01 April 2023 – 31 March 2024; and
- ii. change in format necessitate by a reduction in back-office capacity to prepare additional area committee reports.

6. Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport Update Cunntas às Ùr mu Shaor-phort Uaine Chaolas Chromba

There had been a presentation by the Chief Executive Officer of the Inverness and Cromarty Firth Green Freeport (ICFGF).

In discussion, Members raised the following main issues:-

- the ICFGF had already raised the profile of the Highlands across the UK and Europe and it was important to guide the pace of development so it delivered for communities in Highland;

- housing was a major issue in relation to incoming workers associated with the ICFGF and reference to the importance of a partnership approach, investment and industry involvement to deliver good quality accommodation and the right mix of housing in an appropriate timeframe;
- the Council planned to host a housing summit in Inverness in October 2024 and had progressed the Highland Housing Challenge and Highland Investment Plan and therefore action was being taken at the right pace to support the ICFGF with housing and infrastructure;
- discussions be held with the Crofters Commission on the allocation of new crofts across the Highlands which in turn would create opportunities for housing;
- in addition to housing, there was a need for a partnership approach and investment in essential services to support an increase in population in areas such as child and health care;
- the need also for the NHS to forward plan for the expansion of GP practices and other health services;
- highlighting that the partners or relatives of incoming workers would likely bring skill sets in education, child and health care and other areas of demand;
- in response to a query, the ICFGF Chief Executive Officer confirmed he would be willing to attend the Inverness Community Partnership and the Inverness Community Councils Forum;
- an explanation was sought and provided on the interactions with local trade unions to date;
- confirmation was sought and provided that the ICFGF hoped to sign the Armed Forces Covenant in the near future;
- the Buy Social Scotland Pledge was one of the key areas that underpinned and differentiated the ICFGF deal from the rest of the UK;
- the support provided to the Camanachd Association's initiative in respect of female pupils from Highland schools was important on the basis these types of initiatives also helped promote careers and apprenticeship programmes to young people in the area;
- the need to allay community concerns on the knock on effects of the ICFGF by demonstrating the ongoing action being taken in relation to issues of displacement, growing skills and impact on housing, hotel and other types of accommodations in communities;
- the positive message be reinforced that the ICFGF represented a major long term opportunity for the area. Communication was key particularly with communities, and it would also be helpful for regular updates to be provided to the Committee;
- the need to focus on the long term legacy of the ICFGF for the Highlands. It was explained this would include manufacturing businesses creating sustainable employment for the longer term and leading on the transition to renewables;
- an assurance was sought and provided that given the scale of opportunity associated with the ICFGF, all areas would play a part including the Port of Inverness;
- information was sought and provided on the work being undertaken with young people in schools and further/higher education to inform them of potential career choices and prospects available through the ICFGF and incentives to retain and attract them to the area. This included plans for a large scale apprenticeship scheme of national significance;
- it was hoped the grid connection for the Port of Cromarty Firth was prioritised in SSEN's planning. It was confirmed this issue and the charging regime was actively being considered;

- further information was sought and provided in response to the concerns around the impact of workers camps on communities and the road network; and
- further clarity was sought on the transportation required for workers moving around the area. It was explained opportunities were being considered for active and marine travel, and a centralised transport point and for these to be environmentally effective and from which local people could also benefit.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the presentation.

**7. 2024/25 Annual Report on Inverness Business Improvement District
Aithisg Bhliadhnaid 2024/25 mu Sgìre Leasachadh Gnòthachais Inbhir Nis**

Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as a Non Executive Director of NHS Highland and Non-executive Director of Inverness Business Improvement District. Mr D Gregg made a Transparency Statement in this item as an employee of NHS Highland. 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/22/24 dated 2 August 2024 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place. The report provided a summary of the activities and proposed activities of the Inverness BID Ltd, operating as Inverness City Centre Business Improvement District (BID) for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2025.

Following an introduction to the report by the Senior Community Development Manager for the City of Inverness & South , there was discussion on the growth of the gull population and the problems associated with this. Due to the impact of Avian flu on gull numbers, changes had been made to licensing requirements by NatureScot which meant it would be more challenging to obtain licences to control gulls. This would result in more issues with nuisance/aggressive gulls. It was requested that NatureScot be invited to the next meeting to give a presentation on their policies and procedures on this matter, which was at odds with what the Council wanted to do.

The Inverness Common Good Fund had funded the gull management project, with a contribution from Inverness BID, but had not been able to proceed with it due to the change in licence requirements by NatureScot in respect of all but a very few locations. Therefore, any unused funding from this project would be available for reallocation. It was suggested that this funding be used to rectify some of the problems left behind by gulls, such as litter with gulls accessing bins. It was queried if the design of bins could be changed to prevent this. Practical ways of utilising these funds in addressing the gull management problem would be looked into and reported to the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub Committee.

Further, the work of the Inverness Business Improvement District was commended in improving the area as a great place to live, work, visit and shop.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- NOTED** the work detailed in the report;
- NOTED** the ongoing development of partnership working in the key areas identified;
- NOTED** that a Members Briefing would be arranged to provide for further discussion with BID Board representatives;

- iv. **AGREED** that NatureScot be invited to the next meeting to give a presentation on their policies and procedures on gull management; and
- v. **NOTED** that a report would be submitted to the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee on the feasibility of funds being used to implement gull management measures.

8. **Bereavement Services update** **Cunntas às ùr mu sheirbheisean bàis**

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/23/24 dated 5 August 2025 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place which provided an update to Members on the work being undertaken on burial ground capacity and new burial grounds in the Inverness area.

Following a summary of the report by the Lead Officer, the new extensions and new burial ground developments were welcomed. Amenity Services were aware of the additional work with grass cutting at these sites. It was requested that there should be an annual report on Bereavement Services and this be expanded to include other areas such as cremators maintenance, funeral poverty and funeral payments, so a holistic view of bereavement services was provided in order to see where improvements could be made.

Continuing, the Council needed to be in a position where it could ensure it would maintain its cemeteries to a high standard. The extension to Kilvean cemetery would provide 10 plus years of additional capacity, but the process to identify land for another large cemetery for the City should begin in the near future. Also, the cemetery at Old Petty (Castle Stuart) had fallen into disrepair and while some work had been undertaken at the site there would be further safety checks. Further, the Council had a duty to inspect all memorials every five years and inspections were underway. The need to communicate to Members when the cremators at the Crematorium were out of action was highlighted.

It was highlighted that the Inverness Burial Grounds Commutation Fund provided extra resources for the maintenance of burial grounds. It was intended that this fund would finance a programme of capital burial ground projects in the near future.

In relation to further queries from Members, it was advised that once an access road had been completed work would commence on Dores cemetery; there had been discussion on woodland/natural burials but no firm outcomes as yet; the suggestion of old cemeteries having areas for recreational use had been done in other areas and could be considered here; community involvement in maintaining smaller cemeteries had been done successfully in several areas and the Council was willing to assist community groups wishing to do this.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the progress of burial ground extensions in the Inverness area;
- ii. **NOTED** the challenges with identifying and developing suitable land for burial ground development; and
- iii. **AGREED** an annual report on Bereavement Services, to include wider aspects of services provided such as cremations and funeral poverty, be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

**9. Petition for Speed limit change on A833
Athchuinge airson casg astair atharrachadh air A833**

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/24/24 dated 31 July 2024 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place. The report provided details of a petition requesting that the Highland Council re-classify the section of the A833 road stretching south from Belladrum to the Convinth junction from national speed limit to 40mph.

Following consideration, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the petition and the report; and
- ii. **AGREED** to grant approval for officials to carry out a review and analysis of the relevant section of road with a view to considering implementation of an appropriate speed limit over an appropriate length of the A833. All in accordance with relevant criteria for setting local speed limits with any proposed implementation of speed limits following relevant procedure in terms of consultation advertising etc.

**10. Winter Service Plan for 2024/25
Plana Seirbheis Geamhraidh airson 2024/25**

Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as a Non-executive Director of NHS Highland. 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/25/24 dated 22 July 2024 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place which provided details of the 2024/25 Winter Service Plan for City of Inverness and Area.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- assurance was provided that the road to Ness Castle Primary School was a primary route, and that the inclusion of Broom Drive and Balnakyle Road, Lochardil would be investigated for inclusion as primary routes as they were now bus routes. Attention was drawn to two footpaths that provided essential links to shops and community facilities (from Harris Road to the Hilton shopping centre, and from Drakies to the Inshes Retail Park) and it was asked whether these could be included in the winter maintenance programme as a priority. Members could email details of any other roads or footpaths they felt required reclassification. Adopted Council footpaths would be included;
- several Members expressed concern about the poor state of many gullies, which required regular clearing to avoid build-up of debris which could cause flooding, and icy conditions during cold weather. It was explained that the current gully clearing machine required replacement, however the preferred larger capacity machine had an 18-month waiting list to order, whereas the purchase of two smaller capacity machines was possible much sooner. However, there was insufficient budget at present to purchase two smaller machines. Members asked that a report on this be presented to the next meeting of the Committee;
- concern was expressed at the number of complaints received about insufficient levels of grass-cutting and related maintenance and, in response to a call for a report on this prior to the start of the 2025 growing season, it was suggested that this might be best incorporated into the capital road resurfacing report;

- Mr D Gregg asked for information on responsibility for the winter maintenance of the bus gate at Raigmore Hospital, and this would be provided outwith the meeting;
- the importance of Council services communicating and co-operating with one another on the issues discussed was emphasised;
- attention was drawn to the pavement surface near Ness Bridge, and other similar sections of pavement which had been constructed with a material that was prone to be more slippery than usual during cold weather. Assurance was provided that this was being investigated;
- it was confirmed that the Council collaborated with Bear Scotland and other relevant agencies on winter maintenance;
- information was sought and provided on responsibility for ensuring trees etc did not encroach on the public pavement or obscure road signs etc, with particular reference to a piece of land near the Leonardo Hotel which belonged to the hotel but which the Council was responsible for keeping vegetation clear of the Council's signage; and
- a Q&A page on the Council's website containing information for Members on the issues discussed would be helpful.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- APPROVED** the Winter Service Plan for 2024/25 and **NOTED** that there would be further investigation to determine the inclusion of Balnakyle Road and Broom Drive as priority one routes, the bus gate at Raigmore Hospital and the strategic footpaths referred to at the meeting; and
- AGREED** that a report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee on:
 - gully clearing issues, including equipment; and
 - grass cutting schedule and consideration be given to including summer maintenance issues into the Capital Resurfacing Programme report for 2025-26.

11. Allocation Process for Area Share of Invitation to Pay Scheme Pròiseas Riarachaidh airson Co-roinn Sgìreil den Sgeama Cuireadh airson Pàigheadh

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/26/24 dated 22 July 2024 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

During discussion, the low income from parking at Whin Park was queried but the reason was not known.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** the options set out for distribution in paragraph 6.1 of the report;
- APPROVED** the proposed process for the area allocation of invitation to pay income, with income being given for distribution to the ward within which the car park was located with decisions being taken by the appropriate Community Development Manager in consultation with relevant Ward Members;
- NOTED** that the process would be reviewed after the first year of implementation; and
- NOTED** that in line with the Scheme of Delegation, the delegated powers for the authorisation of spend up to £10,000 would be assigned to the Senior Community Development Manager and over £10,000 would be subject to Committee approval.

12. Inverness Common Good Fund Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis

Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as a Non-executive Director of Inverness Business Improvement District. 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.

a) Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee Annual Report 2023/24 Aithisg Bhliadhnail Fo-Chomataidh Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis 2023/24

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/27/24 dated 5 August 2024 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- the City Leader thanked the Chair and Members of the Sub-Committee for their work;
- the Chair of the Sub-Committee summarised the benefits of Inverness's sizeable common good fund, which was used for the benefit of the residents of the former burgh but provided benefits to the wider Inverness area as a result. He thanked the Members of the Sub-Committee and officers for their work;
- in response to a proposal to fill the vacancy on the Sub-Committee, it was pointed out that this had not been on the agenda, and that it would be preferable to fill this after the forthcoming by-election, at the next meeting of the Committee;
- in relation to the increasing costs of providing civic hospitality, attention was drawn to procurement measures and processes that were being put in place to ensure best value was achieved;
- in response to a query about the work of the town twinning committee, a brief summary of activities was provided, and a report would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee; and
- it was confirmed that citizenship ceremonies were not being held at the Town House.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. scrutinised and **NOTED** the work of the ICGFSC as described within the report;
- ii. **AGREED** to the replacement of the reference to Director of Development and Infrastructure with Assistant Chief Executive – Place in “clause h” and to the inclusion of new “clause j” within the Powers delegated to the ICGFSC shown in Appendix 2 of the report; and
- iii. **NOTED** the vacancy on the Common Good Fund Sub-Committee would be filled at the next meeting of the Committee, after the by-election.

b) Financial Monitoring – 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/28/24 dated 2 August 2024 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

The Committee **NOTED** the near final monitoring report (Appendix 1 of the report) for the Inverness Common Good Fund for the year ended 31 March 2024.

**c) Inverness Common Good Fund – Town House Car Park
Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis – Pàirc Chàraichean Taigh a’ Bhaile**

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/29/24 dated 10 July 2024 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

The Committee **AGREED** that £4,085.00 costs incurred by the Council’s Parking Services Team to operate the Town House Car Park as a Common Good site was charged against the Inverness City Common Good Fund.

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

Mr D McDonald declared an interest in this item as President of Kings Golf Club and left the Chamber for the determination of this item.

Mr K Gowans and made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as an employee of Inverness College UHI. 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/30/24 dated 2 August 2024 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

In this connection, there had been circulated separately a copy of supporting documentation as Booklet A.

The Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the following grant applications for funding;
 - a. UHI Inverness - £5,743
 - b. Hilton Family Support - £14,100
 - c. New Start Highland - £30,550
 - d. Volocity Café & Bicycle Workshop - £7,261
 - e. Apex Highland - £14,581
- ii. **NOTED** that no further applications would be considered during the financial year 2024/25 under the Poverty and Inequality or Other Grants Budgets unless further funding was allocated to the relevant budgets; and
- iii. **AGREED** the Grants budget be closed to further applications for the remainder of financial year 2024/25.

**13. Inverness Local Holidays 2025/26
Saor-làithean Ionadail Inbhir Nis 2025/26**

The Committee **AGREED** the following dates as Local Holidays for the City of Inverness for years 2025 and 2026:

2025

Wednesday 1 January 2025 (New Year’s Day)
Thursday 2 January 2025 (2nd January Holiday)
Monday 3 February 2025

Monday 3 March 2025
Monday 21 April 2025 (Easter Monday)
Monday 5 May 2025 (May Day Holiday)
Monday 7 July 2025
Monday 6 October 2025
Monday 3 November 2025
Thursday 25 December 2025 (Christmas Day)
Friday 26 December 2025 (Boxing Day)

2026

Thursday 1 January 2026 (New Year's Day)
Friday 2 January 2026 (2nd January Holiday)
Monday 2 February 2026
Monday 2 March 2026
Monday 6 April 2026 (Easter Monday)
Monday 4 May 2026 (May Day Holiday)
Monday 6 July 2026
Monday 5 October 2026
Monday 2 November 2026
Friday 25 December 2026 (Christmas Day)
Monday 28 December 2026 (Boxing Day)

14. Minutes **Geàrr-chunntas**

The following Minutes were:-

- i. **NOTED** - City of Inverness Area Committee held on 27 May 2024;
- ii. **APPROVED** - Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee held on 1 August 2024; and
- iii. **APPROVED** - Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group held on 28 June 2024.

Agenda Item 11ii.i

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in Committee Room 3, Headquarters, Inverness on Thursday, 15 August 2024 at 2pm.

Highland Council:

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair (remote)

Mrs J Hendry

Mrs K MacLean

Mr I Brown

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Senior Community Development Manager Inverness & South

Ms F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

Also in Attendance:

Ms K Raite, Inverness Events Manager

Ms M Laws, Inverness BID Deputy Manager (remote)

Mr D Johnstone, Visit Inverness Loch Ness

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were intimated for 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 28 June 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.

Ms K Raite was thanked by the Working Group for her work on the events programme.

Highland Games

A summary was provided of the number of tickets sold, positive and negative feedback that had been received, and the initial and estimated budget figures, noting that some additional costs had been incurred due to the work that was ongoing at Bught Park.

Bonfire Night

A summary was provided of the proposed budget, which indicated estimated costs of £45k for the event.

Red Hot Highland Fling (RHHF)

A summary was provided of the budget for 2023, and the reliance on ticket income for the success of the event. It was noted that due to ongoing works at Bught Park, the capacity for the event would be restricted to 4,000, and that if sales were of a similar level to 2023, this would result in a budget deficit of £48k.

During discussion of the above three events, Members raised the following issues:

In relation to the RHHF, all Members of the Working Group and other representatives present voiced support for the Provost's proposal to cancel the event in 2024 due to the reduced capacity of the site, and the resultant budget deficit that would be incurred. The Provost reported that the Chair of the Common Good Fund Sub Committee, the City Leader, and the Leader of the Opposition had indicated their support for this decision, and that a request be made to the City of Inverness and Area Committee that the £60k budget surplus that would result from the event's cancellation be ringfenced for the events programme in 2025/26, or used as a contingency fund for the events programme. Members considered that the financial and reputational risks of attempting to go ahead with the event in 2024 were too great given the circumstances, and that efforts should instead be directed to creating a significant 'come back' event in 2025.

The Working Group **AGREED** that the RHHF be cancelled in 2024 as detailed during discussion, that an appropriate press release be issued by Corporate Communications in consultation with the Provost and the Senior Community Development Manager, and that the Members of the City of Inverness and Area Committee be informed of the decision prior to the press release being issued. Confirmation of the Bonfire Night event should be included in the Press Release.

Christmas Lights

During discussion of a possible Christmas Lights switch on event, the following issues were considered:

- the possible need for a contractor to put up the lights due to staffing issues in the Council team that normally undertook this, and the need to put the lights up in a timely manner;
- a Saturday, rather than a Sunday, switch on was proposed, to maximise the benefits to city centre businesses;
- the importance of managing public expectations of a Christmas lights switch on event, given the budget restrictions and technical issues, ie the inability to switch on the lights from a central switch;
- discussions would be undertaken with the management of the Eastgate Centre and the Victorian Market about possible Christmas themed events, with possible linkage with the Highland Hospice;

- consideration was given to organising a parade on New Year's event instead of the RHHF, but on the whole this was not thought to be a beneficial use of the limited resources available;
- consideration was given to hosting a Christmas market on the High Street or elsewhere, with specific issues raised including the possibility this could be detrimental to city centre businesses in terms of loss of business to the market stalls, and lack of infrastructure, specifically appropriate stalls and power sources; and
- it was important that the Christmas lights were checked to ensure their functionality prior to being switched on.

Members **NOTED** the information provided.

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 was scheduled for 26 September 2024.

The meeting ended at 3.10pm

Agenda Item 11ii.ii

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in Committee Room 3, Headquarters, Inverness on Thursday, 26 September 2024 at 2pm.

Highland Council:

Mr I Brown

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair (remote)

Mrs J Hendry (remote)

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Senior Community Development Manager Inverness & South

Mrs F MacBain, Senior Committee Officer

Also in Attendance:

Ms K Rait, Inverness Events Manager

Ms E Harrison, Visit Inverness Loch Ness (remote)

Mr I Brown in the Chair

Note: the meeting was inquorate from 2pm to 2.15pm.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were intimated for Mr R Mackintosh and Mrs K MacLean.

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 August 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.

Highland Games

Feedback from 356 questionnaires (6% of the total audience) was provided as

follows:

Q		%
In relation to the event, where do you normally live?	Highland Council area	40%
	Elsewhere in Scotland	11%
	Elsewhere in UK	10%
	Overseas	39%

Q		%
Are you spending at least one night away from home as part of your trip to this event?	Yes	48%
	No	52%

How important was Inverness Highland Games your decision to visit the Highland Council / Scotland?	Only reason	11%
	Main reason	13%
	One of several reasons	27%
	Not a factor in decision	11%
	Live here	38%

Q		%
How would you rate your overall experience at Inverness Highland Games	Excellent	41%
	Good	42%
	Average	13%
	Below Average	4%
	Negative	-

Q – If applicable has viewing the digital event inspired you to visit the physical event in the future? (Yes/ No/ Unsure)

	%
Yes	52%
No	31%
Unsure	17%

Q – Has the experience of attending the event had any impact (positive or negative) on your likelihood to attend events again in future? (Yes/ No/ Unsure)

	%
Yes	71%
No	19%
Unsure	10%

Main points from feedback were as follows:

- Clan stunt show mentioned as favourite addition
- Lack of children’s activities
- More covered seating
- More on-site signage and maps

During discussion, the following issues were raised and / or decided:

- the Senior Community Development Manager would ask Corporate Communications to issue the feedback to the media;
- Emma Harrison would discuss with Kim Rait a means of asking Visit Inverness Loch Ness to track interest in the Games in 2025, possibly by means of a link on the Games’ website;
- the suggestions received in the feedback were achievable and the response was overall very positive; and
- opinions differed on the suitability of the type of music that had played at the Ceilidh.

Bonfire Night

- the budget and preparations for the Bonfire Night were summarised. It was disappointing there would be no funfair in 2024, and the implications of this were considered. A food trail was planned;
- the Senior Community Development Manager was asked by Members to request a breakdown and analysis of the charges levied by the Council to build the bonfire.

Events Programme Proposal

- consideration was being given to holding a 10km road run on the Friday afternoon prior to the Highland Games 2025, with associated ancillary events, including a possible evening event with music;
- consideration was given to the financial situation in relation to Highland Dancing at the Highland Games, and a meeting would be held by Kim Rait with Highland Dance representatives; and
- the importance of being in a position to book musical and other entertainment acts at an early date was emphasised.

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.

The City of Inverness and Area Committee would be asked for confirmation, ahead of the budget setting process in February 2025, to agree in principle that any underspend, resulting from the cancellation of the Red Hot Highland Fling, be carried forward to 2025-26, thus facilitating the early planning of events for 2025-26, especially the booking of musicians to ensure high quality acts could be secured.

Members **NOTED** the information provided and **AGREED** the actions detailed.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Members **NOTED** that the next meeting was scheduled for 24 October 2024.

The meeting ended at 2.55pm

Agenda Item 11ii.iii

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in Committee Room 2, Council Headquarters, Inverness on Thursday, 24 October 2024 at 1.10 p.m.

Highland Council:

Mr I Brown

Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair (remote)

Mrs J Hendry (remote)

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Senior Community Development Manager Inverness & South

Mr A MacInnes, Senior Committee Officer, Corporate Service

Also in Attendance:

Ms K Rait, Inverness Events Manager

Ms M Laws, Inverness BID Deputy Manager (remote)

Mr I Brown in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated for Mr R Mackintosh and Mrs K MacLean.

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 items 5 & 6 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 26 September, 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 to 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.

Bonfire Night

- the budget and preparations for the Bonfire Night were summarised. There were no changes to the bonfire site plan. There were additional costs associated with the supply and erection of Heras Fencing due to the construction works at the Bught park.

- There would be a media briefing regarding the event and parking arrangements. In particular there should be no parking on pavements. An area at the Bught park had been allocated for VIP parking. Traffic management arrangements were in place and parking enforcement officers would be in attendance.
- An update on the 9 traders confirmed for the event was provided. Traders would be ready to trade from 5pm onwards.
- A guy for the top of the bonfire would be provided by Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair if possible.
- Overall, costs had been kept down and represented good value for such a large public event.

Town House Christmas Market

- A Christmas market would be held at the Town House between 6th to 8th December, 2024 with a variety of craft traders and also an area for demonstrations. The proposed costs for the event were highlighted.
- Consideration was being given to providing refreshments with donations to charity;
- Marketing of this event was still to be considered, but it would be promoted appropriately.
- Other partners such as the Inverness Victorian market and Eastgate Shopping Centre would be encouraged to hold their own Christmas events at the same time to further attract people into the City that weekend.
- In consultation with the Chair of the Working Group funds, up to a maximum of £2,500.00 would be allocated for marketing of the Town House Christmas market from the Community Events Budget.. The Council would work with partners to promote the event.
- A separate meeting would be arranged with BID on a Christmas competition for the public involving businesses in the town centre.
- A meeting be arranged with BID Board members and market traders to discuss Christmas preparations/events to attract people into the town centre.
- BID would contact the Choral Society to see if they could be in attendance in the Eastgate Centre on the Christmas market weekend.
- It would be checked if the Salvation Army Band was available for the Christmas market event.

Overall Budget Summary – total costs and income for Highland Games, Bonfire Night and Christmas market were provided, along with a current projection of underspend in funding to be carried forward.

The Working Group:-

- i **NOTED** the information provided; and
- ii **AGREED** that in consultation with the Chair of the Working Group funds, up to a maximum of £2,500.00 be allocated for marketing of the Town House Christmas market.

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.

It was advised that to date, all costs for the events programme were in line with

expectations. The final payment of the grant towards the Highland Games had now been received from Event Scotland.

Noting the excellent working history between the Events & Festivals Working Group and Eden Court Theatre, discussions would be held with Eden Court Theatre regarding the Theatre being involved in future events. The Senior Community Development Manager undertook to arrange a meeting with the Chief Executive Eden Court Theatre to progress this.

An undertaking was given to provide BID with details of events so that they could also promote them.

Members **NOTED** the information provided.

7. Date of Next Meeting

Members **NOTED** that the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 23 January 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

The meeting ended at 1.50 p.m.

Agenda Item 11iii

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held in Committee Room 1, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Monday 28 October 2024 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Mr C Ballance

Mrs I MacKenzie (remote)

Mr M Cameron (remote)

Ms K MacLean

Mr A Graham (Chair)

Non-Members also present:

Dr M Gregson

In attendance:

Mr D Haas, Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South

Mr S Taylor, Civic and Facilities Team Leader

Ms M Murray, Principal Committee Officer, Democratic Services

Mr A Graham in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr D Macpherson, Mr D McDonald, Mrs M Reid and Mr A Sinclair.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements

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

Item 6: Mr A Graham

Item 13: Ms K MacLean

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. Sub-Committee Powers

There had been circulated, and were **NOTED**, the new powers of the Sub-Committee as approved by the City of Inverness Area Committee on 19 August 2024.

5. Civic Hospitality Requests

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/10/24 by the Senior

Community Development Manager, Inverness and South. Copies of the applications and any supporting documentation had been made available via SharePoint in Booklet A.

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

Organisation: Inverness Musical Theatre Company
Event: Inverness Musical Theatre Company 100th Anniversary
Venue: Inverness Town House
Cost: £5,993.00 (Civic Dinner)
Decision: **APPROVED** a Civic Buffet at a cost of up to £3,000.00.

Organisation: The Highland Council, Environment, Development and Sustainable Travel
Event: The Flow Country World Heritage Site Inscription Celebration
Venue: Eden Court Theatre, Inverness (Drinks Reception)
Cost: Financial contribution
Decision: **APPROVED** a financial contribution of £1000.00 on the basis that the Provost or another representative of the City of Inverness Area Committee be invited to give a welcoming address.

Organisation: Royal British Legion Scotland (Inverness Branch)
Event: Annual Inverness Remembrance Day Parade
Venue: Royal British Legion, Inverness (Civic Buffet)
Cost: Financial contribution
Decision: **APPROVED** a financial contribution of £1000.00, noting that the event was on the list of recurring events.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** that applicants remained 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 the cost of civic events continued to increase beyond expected levels and that 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.

6. Grant Monitoring and Requests for Financial Assistance 2024/25

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/11/24 by the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South. Copies of the applications and supporting documentation had been made available via SharePoint in Booklets B and C.

The Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, drew attention to the underspend in respect of the Inverness Gull Project due to changes to gull control licence requirements. Discussion ensued, during which it was explained that talks were ongoing with NatureScot, a representative of which was scheduled to attend the City of Inverness Area Committee on 18 November 2024. Members looked forward to the opportunity to discuss the matter with NatureScot.

A timescale having been sought for the completion of the works in respect of the boardwalk at Merkinch Local Nature Reserve, the Senior Community Development Manager explained that an update was expected imminently. He undertook to pursue it and circulate to Members of the Sub-Committee before the next meeting.

Thereafter, following discussion on the merits or otherwise of the applications for financial assistance, the Sub-Committee determined the applications as follows:-

Application over £10,000

Transparency Statement: Mr A Graham declared a connection to the following application as a family member volunteered for Blythswood Care but, having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest to declare.

Applicant: Blythswood Care

Project/activity: Highland Foodbank - Inverness

Amount requested: £25,000.00

Grant category: Poverty and Inequality

Decision: **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** that the application be **APPROVED** and that the funds be drawn from the Winter Payments budget.

In response to questions regarding the recurring nature of the application and the project costs, the Senior Community Development Manager spoke to the background, explaining that the City of Inverness Area Committee had previously agreed to support a foodbank, on an exceptional basis, to support those living in poverty. It was **AGREED** that the Senior Community Development Manager would ensure Blythswood Care was informed of the exception that was being made.

Town Twinning Application

Applicant: Highland Schools Wind Orchestra

Project/activity: Highland Schools Wind Orchestra 2025 tour to Augsburg

Amount requested: £6,000.00

Grant category: Town Twinning

Decision: **APPROVED** subject to confirmation that a reasonable number of pupils from Inverness would be participating in the tour.

It was **AGREED** that the Senior Community Development Manager would liaise with Sub-Committee Members by email to confirm they were content with the response prior to making the award.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the position in relation to current expenditure and existing grants;
- ii. **AGREED** to determine the Town Twinning application as detailed above;
- iii. **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee, at its meeting on 18 November 2024, that the application for more than £10,000 be determined as detailed above; and
- iv. **AGREED** that an update be sought in respect of the repair of the boardwalk at Merkinch Local Nature Reserve and circulated to Members of the Sub-Committee before the next meeting.

7. Operation Respect Festive 2024 – Inverness and Area

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/12/24 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

Clarification having been sought, and provided, on the costs associated with the BID Security Task Team and where the funding for Operation Respect Festive 2024 would be drawn from, the Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the targeting of objectives for Operation Respect Festive 2024 on providing added community safety and public resource and reassurance whilst supporting measures to reduce the cause and effect of anti-social behaviour and criminality and the emerging issues associated with the cost-of-living crisis on people's physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- ii. **NOTED** that the total funding package directed towards Operation Respect Festive 2024 included substantial direct staffing and resource contributions from partners at Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service, Scottish Ambulance Service, NHS Highland and City Centre businesses via Inverness BID;
- iii. **NOTED** that the Inverness Common Good Fund Partnership Working Budget was fully allocated; and
- iv. **APPROVED** funding of £9,352 for Operation Respect Festive (Winter) 2024 from remaining balances of £3,490 Conference Funding, £1,697 Poverty & Inequality, £1,761 Other Grants and £2,404 City Promotions.

8. Grounds Maintenance – Civic Sites

There had been circulated a draft Civic Sites Amenities Management Plan (the plan) highlighting a number of civic sites centred around the River Ness with the option of considering the adoption of the plan, as a Service Level Agreement with the Amenities Service, to add value to the service already provided by the Council. This would be similar to the agreement already in place for the Ness Islands.

A detailed discussion took place, during which the following points were raised:-

- in response to a question, it was explained that the civic sites in question were not Common Good assets. However, they were located in the city centre and the former Burgh of Inverness, and provided benefit to the people living there;
- several Members expressed concern that the Common Good Fund would be paying for work that should be carried out by the Council's Amenities Service. However, it was emphasised that the work set out in the plan was additional to the service already provided by the Council;
- it was explained that further discussions on the proposals would take place at the forthcoming Members' workshop to inform the budget-setting process. If Members were supportive, the plan would be presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee for consideration;
- the connection to the Common Good Fund and the importance and sensitivity of some of the sites in the plan were recognised;
- when the Inverness Castle Experience opened in 2025, Castle Street would be more heavily used and there would be a greater expectation that it be maintained to a high standard;

- the inclusion of Hydro Ness in the plan was questioned given that it was an income-generating site, and it was queried why ongoing maintenance arrangements had not been put in place at the start of the project;
- it was clarified that there was no funding for the plan in the current Inverness Common Good Fund budget. If the City of Inverness Area Committee agreed to adopt it, there would be an additional line in next year's budget;
- information was sought, and provided, as to how sites would be monitored to ensure that an enhanced service was being provided;
- concern was expressed that adopting the plan would lead to an influx of requests in respect of other sites, and would create a two-tier system for maintenance that was not geared towards the people of Inverness;
- it was important to be clear about what the baseline levels of service were;
- if the plan was to be adopted, it should be for a pilot period of one year to see how it worked in practice and whether the public and Elected Members were satisfied that it represented value for money;
- having better amenities services across the board would be a better solution. However, the funding challenges facing the Council were recognised;
- having a well-maintained city centre was important for tourism and the economy;
- information was sought, and provided, on High Life Highland's responsibilities in respect of Bellfield Park;
- historically, members of the community had looked after some civic sites. However, that generation of people were no longer fit and able to do so; and
- it was suggested that consideration be given to utilising the Community Payback team and employability schemes.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the progress being made, and that Members' feedback would inform the next stage of discussions.

9. City of Inverness Floral Project 2025

The Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, gave a verbal update on the city centre and wider city of Inverness annual floral displays, during which information was provided on the current delivery model, the costs involved and the work that had been undertaken to explore whether there were any alternative delivery models that could be implemented.

Following a detailed discussion, during which clarification was sought, and provided, on a number of points, and potential means of reducing costs in future years were suggested, the Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the update; and
- ii. **AGREED** that the Senior Community Development Manager would liaise with Inverness BID regarding the possibility of businesses contributing to the cost of floral displays in future years.

10. Town House Artwork and Honours Board

The Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, gave a verbal update on proposals in respect of the artwork and Honours Board in the Town House.

Following discussion, during which information was sought, and provided, on insurance arrangements and support was expressed for the proposal to install a new Honours Board, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the update.

11. Homologation Requests

The following applications had been approved by the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, in consultation with the Sub-Committee, subject to homologation at the next available Sub-Committee Meeting:-

a. University of the Highlands & Islands

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the request by the University of the Highlands & Islands (UHI) to extend the grant period of the grant approved to IGNITE 2024 to IGNITE 2025.

b. Town Twinning – La Baule Visit

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the approval of a grant of £5,000 from the Town Twinning budget towards a visit by the Mayor of La Baule to Inverness in November 2024.

c. Enable Works

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the request by Enable Works to extend the time period of their grant to 31 March 2026.

d. UHI

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the request by UHI to extend the time period of their grant to enable the applicants to look for additional funding for the project.

e. Bellfield Park

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the request to grant a lease to Community Sauna Highland to operate a not-for-profit outdoor sauna in Bellfield Park.

f. Inverness Sea Cadets

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision by the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, to grant an extension to the time period of the grant approved to the Inverness Sea Cadets towards fabric building improvements at the Sea Cadets building in Kessock Road to enable them to get a contractor in place and complete the work.

12. Homologation of Civic Hospitality Requests

The Sub-Committee:-

- a. **AGREED** to homologate the decision to award the following civic hospitality request:-
 - i. 75th Anniversary of Inverness & District Branch of The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society - £3,689.00; and
- b. **NOTED** the actual cost of the catering at the Highland Rugby Club for the St Valery Rugby Club visit had been £692.50 (£750 had been approved).

13. Evaluation Forms

Transparency Statement: Ms K MacLean declared a connection to this item as a member of the Inverness Openarts Steering Group. However, she had not been involved in the grant application and, having applied the objective test, did not consider that she had an interest to declare.

Evaluation Forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects had been made available via SharePoint in Booklet D.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- it was suggested a small sample of Evaluation Forms should be presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee;
- in response to a question, it was explained that, whilst media releases were issued in respect of grants awarded by the Inverness Common Good Fund, there was no publicity on the Evaluation Forms and what the projects supported had achieved, and the Senior Community Development Manager undertook to liaise with Corporate Communications in that regard; and
- a bi-annual Town House newsletter was suggested.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the Evaluation Reports; and
- ii. **AGREED** that the Senior Community Development Manager would liaise with Corporate Communications regarding the possibility of publicising what the projects supported by the Inverness Common Good Fund had achieved.

14. Civic Lighting Requests

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the following requests for the period 1 September to 11 November 2024:-

- International Overdose Awareness Day
- Mental Health Week
- Organ Donation Week
- World Meningitis Week
- Baby Loss Awareness Week
- #LightUpMBC
- Pots.UK
- Alzheimer's Foundation of America
- Remembrance Week

15. Free Hall Lets

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the following free hall let:-

- Coffee Morning – Marie Curie fundraising event - £375

16. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the dates for the 2025 meetings would be scheduled to coincide with the City of Inverness Area Committee meetings and would be circulated in due course.

The meeting concluded at 11.20 am.