

The Highland Council
Inverness City Committee
8 June 2009

Highland Homecoming – ur beatha dhan dùthaich

Agenda Item	12
Report No	ICC 43/09

Report by Director Highland 2007

Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Members on plans to host and to promote the Highlands' flagship event for Homecoming Scotland in October 2009 – 'Highland Homecoming - ur beatha dhan dùthaich'.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Within the overall aims of the events and festivals strategy to enhance the cultural infrastructure and programme of events and activity of the region, one of the key current objectives for the Council is to maximise the Highlands' contribution to the national Homecoming Scotland celebrations. To this effect The Highland Council is leading a multi agency partnership that will design and manage the flagship event for Homecoming Scotland in the Highlands in 2009. This partnership includes UHI, University of Aberdeen, University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Eden Court Theatre.
- 1.2 The flagship event, 'Highland Homecoming', will take place from 19 to 31 October 2009. The programme for 'Highland Homecoming' will comprise three programme strands:
- a) An international conference entitled 'Scotland's Global Impact – how one small nation changed the world!'
 - b) A cultural programme of events across the Highlands and Islands.
 - c) An arts and cultural fringe programme within Eden Court Theatre.

2. Programme

- 2.1 The international conference entitled 'Scotland's Global Impact – how one small nation changed the world' will form the core of the programme. The international line up of speakers and themes has been devised by leading historians from UHI and the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Our aim is to attract at least 500 of the 850 conference delegates from outside Scotland and funding has been provided and confirmed from Homecoming Scotland and HIE to support this element of the programme. The conference will take place within Eden Court Theatre in Inverness from 22 to 24 October and will be opened by the First Minister and Chaired by Lesley Riddoch. A copy of the most up to date conference programme is attached in Booklet A - Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Around the core of the conference we wish to encourage a wider range of audiences to participate in 'Highland Homecoming' by presenting a broader range of arts, heritage and cultural events that will appeal to visitors and locals alike. By extending the time period of the programme and by adding a

programme of arts and cultural events, we aim to encourage visitors to come earlier and to stay longer. We also wish to ensure that the people of the Highlands have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy Homecoming Scotland in their own communities. To this effect funding has been secured from the Europe, External Affairs and Culture Directorate within the Scottish Government and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to support the development of a programme of cultural events across the Highlands and Islands that will link with the themes of the conference and Homecoming Scotland. An outline of the programme of events that will comprise the regional cultural programme will be presented on the day of the meeting.

- 2.3 To complement the conference and regional cultural programmes we will add an arts and cultural fringe to 'Highland Homecoming' through funding provided by the Scottish Arts Council. The fringe programme has been devised by Colin Marr, Director of Eden Court Theatre, and will be focused in the Inverness area from 19 to 31 October. As the development of the programme is still to be finalised, the most up to date version will be presented on the day of the meeting.
- 2.4 The full programme for 'Highland Homecoming' will be finalised, printed and launched by the end of June.

3. Funding and Sponsors

3.1 To support the development and delivery of Highland Homecoming, cash funding has been secured from the following public sector partners:

- £60K The Highland Council
- £60K Homecoming Scotland
- £60K Scottish Government
- £60K Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- £60K HIE
- £20K Scottish Arts Council
- Application pending to LEADER

3.2 Further in kind support has been secured from the following public and private sector partners:

- Conference media partner The Scotsman
- Highland Homecoming media partner The Inverness Courier
- Ashers' Bakeries
- Conference partner UHI
- Conference partner University of Aberdeen
- Conference partner University of Edinburgh
- Conference partner Centre for Battlefield Archaeology, Glasgow University
- Fringe programme partner Eden Court Theatre

4. Marketing and PR

4.1 Marketing and communications support for the promotion of Highland Homecoming and the conference was provided on a month to month basis by Small Creek Communications and UHI from mid 2008 to April 2009. The framework that guided the marketing and communications activity during this

period is contained within Booklet A - Appendix 2.

- 4.2 In April 2008 Weber Shandwick won the tender to undertake the marketing and PR for Highland Homecoming in the final 6 months leading up to the date of the event. Weber Shandwick have prepared a detailed work plan to prepare, launch and deliver the programme for Highland Homecoming to key audiences. A copy of this plan is contained within Booklet A - Appendix 3.

Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note the report.

Signature:

Designation: Director Highland 2007

Date: 25 May 2009