

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

INVERNESS CITY COMMITTEE – 8 FEBRUARY 2010

Agenda Item	4
Report No	ICC 03/10

Inverness City Centre Street Scene Stakeholders Update

**Report by Director of Transport, Environmental & Community Services and
Inverness City Manager**

SUMMARY

This report summarises the main points from the City Street Scene Stakeholders Meeting held on Monday 25 January 2010 and serves to update members on progress with the actions.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A meeting of the City Centre Street Scene Stakeholders was held on Monday 25 January in the Town House. A range of Members, Stakeholders and officials attended to discuss matters of importance to the street scene environment. The minutes of the meeting are contained in Appendix A.
- 1.2 Appendix B contains an update on the Inverness old town Arts Work Group who successfully delivered the 'Windows on the City' project over the Festive period.

2. Key Actions from the Meeting

- 2.1 Stagecoach will be asked to attend the next Street Scene Stakeholders meeting as a number of points had been raised in relation to their operations.
- 2.2 In relation to Traffic Management the pedestrian crossing to the north side of the Queensgate junction with Academy Street would be removed. Further discussion will take place with Morrisons regarding the siting of a bus shelter at their store.
- 2.3 The works at Stephen's Street and Crown Road retaining wall are proceeding and the business owners and residents would be kept informed of progress.
- 2.4 An engagement plan with timescales is to be drawn up for Huntly Street to keep residents and business informed of the proposals for streetscape and traffic management improvements there.
- 2.5 Arrangements for commercial cardboard collection to be further developed.
- 2.6 Plans to develop the means of progressing improvements to building maintenance would be discussed at the next BID liaison meeting.

3. Resource Implications

3.1 There are no additional resource implications resulting from this report.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The Committee is invited to note the minutes of the Street Scene Stakeholders Group and the key actions from the meeting.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services

Date: 28 January 2010

Report Author Cameron Kemp, Integrated Transport Manager

Background
Papers

APPENDIX A

Inverness City Centre Streetscene Stakeholders Meeting

Monday, 25th January 2010 at 10am
Chamber, Town House

In Attendance	
<p>Provost Jimmy Gray (Chair) (JG) Cameron Kemp, Integrated Transport Manager (CK) David Haas, City Manager (DH) Cllr Bet McAllister (BMc) Cllr Janet Campbell (JC) Shane Manning, Traffic Support Officer (SM) Vic Rawlins, Chair of the Taxi Association (VR) Peter Taylor, Taxi Association (PT) Bill Fraser (BF) Mike Smith, BID Manager (MS) Susan Christie, Inverness Old Town Art, (SC) Alan McKinnie, Waste Operations Manager (AM) Jimmy Flint (JF)</p> <p>Also in Attendance:-</p> <p>Ellen Disney, Clerical Assistant, Chief Executive's Office (ED)</p>	
1. Apologies	
<p>Apologies for absence were tendered on behalf of Debbie Maguire (Community Works Manager), Stewart Nicol (Inverness Chamber of Commerce), Les Houlker (Technical Manager) and Councillor Kerr.</p>	
2. Action Note from 30th November 2009	
<p>JC pointed out that on page 2 of the note where it says that she confirmed that Stagecoach would be taking full responsibility for the oil spills this is incorrect as she did not say this. Cllr Campbell also confirmed if Stagecoach are willing to supply cleaning chemicals with confirmation with JF confirming that TECS would remove the oil.</p> <p>JF added that the bus stops are being badly damaged. CK advised that those causing the damage would be pursued for the cost of the repair. SM advised that he has been called re congestion issues to find that the problem is that a bus has broken down. He also said that "Not In Service" buses are being left in bays.</p> <p>JG would like a representative from Stagecoach to attend the next meeting of this Group.</p>	

<p>3. Traffic Management</p> <p>CK advised that funding is now in place for the removal of the pedestrian crossing on Academy Street adjacent to Queensgate. SM confirmed this and went on to inform the Group that this and the re sequencing of the lights will help to improve the flow of traffic on Academy Street as well as make it safer for pedestrians. This should take place before the end of the financial year.</p> <p>JC enquired re the changes to Crown Road. SM ran through the changes and advised that public transport will be given priority and that under certain circumstances Crown Road may miss a cycle in the lights in order to do this. The lights will then try and compensate for the time lost.</p> <p>BMc enquired about the possibility of a bus shelter outside Morrisons. CK advised that there is not enough space for one but they have been in touch with Morrisons re getting some land as there should have been a bus shelter put in place when the store was built. So far there has been no response.</p> <p>BMc will write to Morrisons re this issue.</p>	<p>BMc</p>
<p>4. Stephen's Street</p> <p>CK advised that the tenders are due back tomorrow and that work should start in March.</p> <p>JG stated that he feels that there should be consultation with the business owners and residents in Stephens Street.</p>	
<p>5. Crown Road Retaining Wall</p> <p>SC updated the Group on this. She advised that she has been looking for a new material to use for the artwork. She has found something that is easily cleaned, robust and weatherproof and will be visiting the manufacturers on Wednesday (27 January).</p> <p>CK asked whether the material would be suitable for pressure washing. SC offered to show CK samples of the material.</p>	<p>SC / CK</p>
<p>6. Huntly Street</p> <p>CK advised that he has the preliminary layout of Huntly Street and that they are procuring people to do the modelling. Similar materials as those used for Streetscape will be used. Flood defences will put in place. This work will take place in the next financial year.</p> <p>Traffic Management on Huntly Street was discussed and SM advised that nothing has been finalised yet.</p> <p>DH asked that CK put together an engagement plan with timescales.</p>	<p>CK</p>
<p>7. Waste Management</p> <p>AM updated the Group on the current position. He stated that Baron Taylors Street and Huntly Street have both improved. BTS businesses and residents are using informal bin compounds. There is currently a problem with commercial cardboard pick up. Businesses have been putting their cardboard out for collection without knowing who their collector is. This is a free service and has been intermittent lately.</p> <p>JG stated that this could be an issue for BID to pick up on. There is an issue regarding co ordination and one service should be provided that will aim to reduce / manage and recycle waste.</p> <p>DH suggested that a protocol be put in place and issued to businesses.</p> <p>AM advised that the contract will be up for renewal at the end of the financial year. All paperwork will include a protocol. It is important to identify the service provider and having a contract in place will</p>	

<p>make enforcement easier.</p> <p>AM and MS will liaise re commercial cardboard collection. DH advised that Debbie Maguire and JF should also be involved with this and would like JF to attend the first meeting.</p>	<p>AM / MS / JF / DB</p>
<p>8. Inverness Old Town Art</p> <p>Ramada – SC advised that a revised proposal was submitted at the end of December for the visage of the building and she is meeting with the senior management team next Tuesday (2 February). She can provide pdfs of the proposals. It is planned to replace windows and paint panels.</p> <p>Victorian Market – it was planned to install the entrances in January but this was considered an unrealistic target. SC advised that after Wednesday she will be in a stronger position to feedback to the Group.</p>	
<p>9. Building Maintenance</p> <p>DH advised that letters went out to proprietors from BID re this. There has been a mixed reaction and the proprietors who have not responded should be approached independently.</p> <p>VR advised that on the end gable of the Filling Station restaurant on the corner of Falcon Square, water gushes down like a waterfall. DH and VR will liaise re this.</p> <p>The condition of various properties throughout the City was discussed. DH stated that the problem buildings should be identified. DH, MS and CK will liaise at the next BID meeting.</p>	<p>DH / VR</p> <p>DH / MS / CK</p>
<p>10. Empty Shops</p> <p>SC stated that “Getting Up” was both an adventure and experiment. She advised that getting access to spaces was challenging and that if she carried out this event again in the future she would talk to the owners of units and find spaces first. SC went on to say that the press coverage was good and that there was a reasonable turn out for the “Walkabout” tour on 19th December 2009.</p> <p>Commercial sponsorship of the artwork was discussed. DH suggested putting together a portfolio of work to show potential backers.</p> <p>JG suggested that between the Council and BID a register of shops that may be used could be produced</p> <p>DH suggested getting some feedback from people in the City to include in a report for the ICC. BM then suggested that SC could prepare a presentation using video footage of “Getting Up” to present to the ICC.</p> <p>SC stated that the car park staff at the Rose Street Car Park were supportive and gave over their ground floor room for artists to use, she concluded by saying that they were absolutely brilliant every step of the way.</p>	<p>SC</p>
<p>11. AOB</p> <p>VR advised that he attended a meeting at Burnet Road which Neil Young chaired. The relocation of the bus stop at M & S was discussed and Stagecoach advised that they have no issue with moving it to the underpass. SM stated that there are positives and negatives with this and that he would like to continue dialogue with Stagecoach.</p> <p>VR advised that the taxi signs are now up. The one at Poundstretchers is too small and people are still parking there. An Community Beat Officer has been issued with a book of parking tickets to use as required. The problem is that he is the only one with them so if he is not working then people will continue to park there.</p> <p>VR went on to advise that Mike Elsey wrote to Northern Constabulary on 5 November 2009 asking that</p>	

<p>police officers be issued with tickets but it is thought that this has not been done yet. JF suggested that VR attend the City Forum tomorrow (26 January) to ask this question.</p> <p>CK informed the Group that TECS is developing a website linked to the HC website which will enable users to do things like check real time bus information and check traffic queues via live camera feeds. SM added that if anyone wants to see a similar example they can check Leedstravel.info as Leeds as a similar website.</p> <p>JF read out a list of issues that DK has advised him that he would like to see on the next agenda, these were as follows:</p> <p>Riverside Lights Finger Post Signs Pot Holes in Academy Street Lights under the bridge</p> <p>JF also advised that 20mph limits would be discussed with Members at tomorrow's (26 January) WBM.</p> <p>BM wanted to record her thanks to the bus and taxi drivers for getting people around during the bad weather.</p>	<p>VR</p>
<p>12.Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The date of the next meeting will be set and circulated in due time.</p>	

GETTING UP – WINDOWS ON THE CITY

Getting Up – Windows on the City project launched at Rose Street car park with the aim of increasing footfall and reinvigorating empty shops at a key time of year ie. the run-up to Christmas & January period. The project was organised by Inverness Old Town Art (IOTA) in collaboration with Inverness BID and was supported by Inverness Common Good Fund.

Old Town Rose Street car park played host to a free event on Saturday 19th December to launch the project.

Live music from local band 28 Jacks kicked off the proceedings and artworks greeted the public along with hot soup on offer (by YUM! Café) to raise the freezing temperature. The event took place on Level 8 with short films transmitted to your phone, video projections and sequence of mini-art installations displayed down a central stairwell that was opened up specially.

After the launch, the public were taken on a special free walkabout tour with artists talking about their work. This concluded with an art performance at the 99p Shop where everyone there was able to win an original piece of work in exchange for 99p.

Artists overhauled a range public spaces and empty shops to brighten venues in the Old Town, to get people talking in the city centre and to draw different audiences into city centre. The key locations included:

- Ex-Video Drive In
3 projects with archive film footage projected, contemporary Garden of Eden and tiny glowing interactive mushroom hinting at regeneration.
- Ex- 99p Shop
Contemporary Art Tombola with (over) 99 artists work given out to the public in exchange for 99p ticket.
- YUM! Café
featured films by 8 artists that can also be accessed via your phone.
- Ex Gows Shop
Janie Nicoll played with sales stickers & shop-style text interspersed with quotes from Oscar Wilde, the Beatles and Tom Waits).
- Levels 4, 6 & 8 at Rose Street carpark
large cut-out images by Andy MacVicar using archive photography from the Highlands which he's embellished and represented.

The businesses have been extremely generous in allowing access to the spaces. David Gow, DM Hall, Frank Taylor (owner of Video Drive-In) & Graham & Sibbald have all been flexible and open-minded in their support of this initiative. Feedback from owners & local residents is that this initial trial project has shown what enormous potential lies in creatively inhabiting disused units.

PRESS INTEREST

The project has attracted a healthy degree of press interest with online activity on Facebook, twitter & websites (incl ICA). Features and reviews were published in Highland News, The Courier, BBC Online, The Herald, The Press & Journal. Music journalist at the Highland News gave the launch event her enthusiastic approval and described the proceedings as urban, clever, fun and supercool!

This project lays down some ideas for further developing arts projects that target empty shops and shows the breadth of ideas that artists can bring to a project of this kind.

Susan Christie
Commissions Manager
Inverness Old Town Art