

**City of Inverness Area Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in 2nd Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Monday, 19 September 2016 at 10.10 am.

**Present:**

Highland Council

Mr I Brown (from 10.20 am)

Mr G Ross

Other Representatives

Mr M Smith, Manager, Inverness BID

**Officials in Attendance:**

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager (until 10.55 am)

Mr G Reynolds, Inverness Events Manager

Miss J Green, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

Miss L Farquharson, Administrative Assistant, City Area Manager's Office

**Mr G Ross in the Chair**

**Business**

**1. Appointment of Chair**

It was **NOTED** that the meeting was not quorate and therefore the Appointment of Chair and any other decisions would be deferred until the next meeting and this meeting would continue as a briefing with Mr G Ross acting as interim Chair.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr F Parr and Mr H Wood, Highland Council, Mr G Ambrose, CEO, Visit Inverness Loch Ness, Ms J Cuddy, Manager, Eastgate Shopping Centre, Mr C Marr, Chief Executive, Eden Court Theatre and Ms A Windsor, Cluster General Manager, Columba Hotel.

**3. Exclusion of the Public**

It was **AGREED** that, under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public should 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. Declarations of Interest**

The following declaration of interest was **NOTED**:-

Item 10 – Mr G Ross (non-financial)

## **5. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

There had been circulated Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 26 July 2016 which were **NOTED**.

Arising from the Minutes, clarification was sought on the agreement that Ms J Cuddy, Mr G Ambrose and Mr M Smith would manage the Charity Torchlight Procession and seek nominations from charities wishing to benefit from this opportunity. In response, it was confirmed that Ms J Cuddy, Mr G Ambrose and Mr M Smith would manage the charity element thus having the power to decide the charity/charities and the responsibility to sell the torches. In this regard, their role would be confirmed in writing and an estimate of how many torches were expected to be sold would be sent to Mr M Smith.

At this point, Mr I Brown joined the meeting.

## **7. Sponsorship Report Update**

An update on sponsorship was provided at the meeting by the City Area Manager and Events Manager during which it was reported that potential opportunities involving discussions with interested third parties were being investigated with Mr T MacLennan, Council's Commercial Manager and would be reported to future meetings of the Working Group and City of Inverness Area Committee.

Information on major in kind sponsorship and discounts was tabled at the meeting.

During discussion, Members emphasised the need to reduce the cost to the Common Good Fund and expressed caution in relation to negotiations with potential event partners.

Thereafter, the update was **NOTED**.

## **8. Events and Tourism Workshop Update**

It was **NOTED** that the City Area Manager and Events Manager would be in attendance at an Events and Tourism Workshop organised by HIE which would take place on Tuesday 1 November 2016 to generate a joint plan that linked events, marketing and conference tourism.

## **6. Budget Update**

An update was provided at the meeting by the Events Manager on the budget, including the forecasted expenditure for the Highland Games, during which he predicted that the budget was on target due to savings that had been made. Furthermore, the Events Manager advised that the value of the Events Programme was £390k including in kind sponsorship and discounts and that

the £320k investment from the Common Good Fund represented 83% of the income.

During discussion:-

- it was confirmed that the host of the Hogmanay Show, Craig Hill, would be provided with the same hospitality as previous years;
- it was felt that the budget of £24k allocated for Marketing was not huge considering the price of newspaper advertisements and was therefore good value for money. In response, it was explained that because the majority of events were mature and free they could be marketed sufficiently using social media and the Council's website;
- clarification was sought regarding the expenditure for Traffic Management and in response it was confirmed that it went towards signage for road diversions and that there was no charge from Police Scotland for directing traffic;
- it was confirmed that Police Scotland would provide assistance again at the Halloween Show this year and discussions were being held with the contractor for the West Link Project in relation to exits from the Bught Park area.

Thereafter, the budget position was **NOTED**.

## **10. Inverness British Legion**

**Declaration of interest – Mr G Ross declared a non-financial interest in this item as Treasurer of Highland Disability Sport but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that his interest did not preclude him from taking part in the discussion.**

The City Area Manager confirmed that he, the Events Manager and the Provost would meet with the Royal British Legion Scotland President Sir Alistair Irwin in October as a civic matter to discuss the Inverness British Legion's involvement in the Highland Games and other future events.

During discussion, support was expressed for inclusion of Highland Disability Sport in the arrangements for the Highland Games.

The position was **NOTED**.

## **11. Park(ing) Day**

The City Manager advised that the Chief Executive had been approached by a local organiser requesting consideration of holding a Park(ing) Day event in Inverness which involved transforming car parking spaces into temporary public parks. In this regard, consideration was being given to the possibility of arranging it as a student based event next year using the Town House car park and a few token spaces in the City Centre. The City Manager provided assurance that this would be in partnership with BID to ensure there was no

disruption to the business community's trading environment.

At this point, Mr D Haas left the meeting.

During discussion, concern was expressed that the concept was not suitable for Inverness due to its small size and accessible rural areas. It was also commented that organisers who wished to promote ideas should be providing resources.

Thereafter, the position was **NOTED**.

## **12. Piano Event**

The Events Manager advised that a request had been received to hold a Piano event which involved decorating pianos and placing them around the City Centre.

During discussion, support was expressed for alternative ideas which were undertaken in other cities. However, specifically in relation to the proposed idea, concern was expressed that it would be difficult to source enough pianos and suitable locations.

Thereafter, the position was **NOTED**.

## **9. Update on 2016 Events**

An update was provided at the meeting by the Events Manager on the following events:-

- i. Inverness Highland Games – this year was the 9th (out of 24) most well attended paid event and attendance had increased by 75% compared with 2014. Members commended the event for attracting large crowds and having a tremendous atmosphere despite competing with other events at the same time of year. However the prize money to attract competitors was not huge. In response, it was highlighted that the Games Committee would like to increase the prize money but were constricted by budgets;
- ii. Kirking of the Council – visitors and students were in attendance from the twin city Augsburg in Germany;
- iii. Halloween – a theme had been chosen by Eden Court Creative and Arts in Motion who would choose the themes in future so that they could embed the theme into their work during the Summer. The start time on the Sunday had been moved to half an hour earlier to accommodate performers who were travelling some distance. In relation to concerns about parking due to the construction of the West Link Road it was suggested that a special price be requested for parking in the Eastgate Centre and people be encouraged to walk from the City Centre;
- iv. Bonfire – this year was the first of two years to be held on a Saturday evening;
- v. Christmas Lights – following discussions with the Police and Fire Service it was agreed that the Torchlight Parade would end outside the Town

House due to safety concerns. Complaints had been received that not everyone was able to see the projections on the Town House so it was not proposed to have a stage outside the Town House in future years. Other locations had been considered but were not suitable and as a result the Torchlight Parade model would be used to accommodate the large attendance;

- vi. Winter Wonderland – no issues;
- vii. Hogmanay – the bands would be announced in a press release following the meeting and an earlier announcement of the bands was recommended for next year. In relation to VIPs it was proposed that a list of events be sent out at the start of each year, followed by an invitation 6 weeks in advance of the event and a reminder 2 weeks in advance to ensure Members were aware of what was happening. In response to a question, it was confirmed that there would not be a press conference this year but there would be radio interviews.

Thereafter, the update was **NOTED**.

### **13. Feedback from Stakeholders**

The Events Manager reported that feedback from stakeholders in support of the work undertaken by the Working Group was included in the report to the meeting of the City of Inverness Area Committee on 1 September 2016 and remained generally positive.

In discussion, it was commented that the negativity was purely in relation to the Common Good Fund covering the full cost of the events which needed to be resolved.

The position was **NOTED**.

### **14. Date of Next Meeting**

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 13 February 2016 at 10.00 am.

It was also **NOTED** that arrangements would be made to hold a Special Meeting to appoint the Chair.

The meeting ended at 11.20 am.