

**The Highland Council
City of Inverness Area Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee** held in the 1st Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Monday, 7 November 2016 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Mr I Brown
Mrs H Carmichael
Mr A Graham
Mrs E McAllister

Mr T Prag
Mr G Ross
Mrs J Slater

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr S Taylor, Civic and Facilities Team Leader
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, City Manager's Office
Miss J Green, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

Mr G Ross in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr A Christie and Mr R Laird.

In the absence of the Chair, Mrs H Carmichael seconded by Mr A Graham nominated Mr G Ross as interim Chair.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Committee **NOTED** the following declarations of interest:-

Item 4 Booklet A –Mrs B McAllister and Mrs J Slater (both non-financial)
Item 4 Booklet B – Mr I Brown and Mr A Graham (both non-financial)

3. Exclusion of Public

The Sub-Committee **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50(A) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public should be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

4. Requests for Financial Assistance 2016/17

Declarations of Interest –

Mrs B McAllister declared a non-financial interest in the applications from Inverness Science Festival and NessBookFest on the basis that she was acquainted with people involved in the projects but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interest did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion.

Mrs J Slater declared a non-financial interest in the application from Inverness Festivals Association as the Chair of Inverness Festivals Association and left the room during discussion of the application.

Mr I Brown declared a non-financial interest in the application from Community Action Raigmore Estate (CARE) on the basis that the project was in his Ward and he had attended a public meeting about the project 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.

Mr A Graham declared a non-financial interest in the application from Blythswood Care on the basis that a family member was a volunteer for the Highland Foodbank and left the room during discussion of the application.

There had been circulated Report No GSC/10/16 dated 25 October 2016 by the Inverness City Area Manager which listed the applications received for financial assistance from the Inverness Common Good Fund. A copy of the applications and supporting documentation had been circulated as Booklets A and B.

Prior to discussion of the applications, an update was provided by the Inverness City Area Manager on the funds committed for grants during which it was explained that the tenders returned for the floodlighting installation as part of the Queens Park Upgrade were over budget and it was proposed to re-evaluate the work with the aim to receive revised tenders by March 2017 which would require a further extension to their grant period, which was **AGREED**. Furthermore, it was confirmed that work was going ahead as planned by the Calman Trust and the Inverness High School S1 trip to Nethy Bridge had taken place and funds would be drawn down in due course. In general, it was confirmed that funds were continuing to be monitored and outcome statements for projects were being sought and would be reported to a future meeting.

Members sought an update on the agreement with the Inverness Angling Club and in response it was confirmed that funding for future years would be subject to a revised action plan and business case due in early 2017. Members also suggested that 'Update on Funds Committed for Grants' be a standing item on the agenda at future meetings, which was **AGREED**.

Booklet A

The Sub-Committee determined applications for funding of up to £10,000 as follows:-

Highland Council (Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnerships for Highland and Moray) (£9,800 sought) **APPROVED £9,800**

Appointment of Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer

In discussion, Members sought and received clarification that the role of Armed Forces Community Covenant Officer would not duplicate work already being undertaken by partner organisations and requested that reference in the application to “the activities of the postholder could include” be changed to “will include”. Confirmation was also sought and received that the funding was for one year. In relation to other funding, a broader funding base was sought to reflect the military activity undertaken outside the former burgh of Inverness and it should also be noted that in kind support was received from Dot Ferguson, Ward Manager, Highland Council. Some Members felt the application should be deferred until an announcement had been made regarding the future of Fort George.

SNAP (Special Needs Action Project) (£480 sought) **APPROVED £480**

SNAP – Christmas Activities

In discussion, Members noted that it was a re-occurring application and commented that there were many other disadvantaged groups of people and that children were often the best catered for at Christmas. It was suggested that in future a sum of money could be set aside for Christmas projects.

Inverness Science Festival (£5,000 sought) **APPROVED £5,000**

2017 Inverness Science Festival

The Inverness City Area Manager reported that the Principal Tourism and Film Officer had advised that the application was sound and mainly focussed on the involvement of the local community but would attract a small minority of visitors and therefore subvention funding was not necessary. It was further advised that a grant had been awarded last year.

Inverness Festival Association (£10,000 sought) **APPROVED £8,000**

Inverness Music Festival 2017

It was advised that the amount requested had increased since the previous years and last year £8,000 was awarded with a further £2,000 being underwritten, which was subsequently not required. An update on the Business Plan was sought. Thereafter, it was **AGREED** to approve £8,000 and underwrite up to £2,000 on the basis that a business plan is provided.

British Red Cross (£1,500 sought) **REFUSED**

Provision of Wheelchairs in the Inverness Area

During discussion, Members expressed concern in relation to funding of the British Red Cross and suggested that the purchase of wheelchairs be included in their business package. Members queried whether it was aimed at tourists or locals, how it would be delivered and what support NHS Highland and other

organisations provided. In conclusion, Members felt the application did not express enough focus on local benefit.

NessBookFest (£750 sought) **APPROVED £750**

NessBookFest 2016

During discussion, Members expressed support for the re-establishment of a Book Festival in Inverness and specifically for the list of speakers, some of which were local to Inverness. It was confirmed the organisation had received Ward Discretionary Funding which was part of their strategy.

Scottish Highland Snow Dogs Rescue (£7,460 sought) **APPROVED £1,000**

Home to Paws

During discussion, it was suggested that because the organisation would also cover Nairn that funding be shared with the Nairn Common Good Fund. However, it was explained that the Nairn Common Good Fund did not have a budget for discretionary payments but that a proportion of the costs could be given from the Inverness Common Good Fund. Members felt that a donation towards the start-up costs was more appropriate and were interested to know how pets were currently cared for and which other organisations Home to Paws worked with. Thereafter, it was **AGREED** to approve £1,000 and to write to the organisation to ask what role statutory agencies undertook and which organisations they worked with.

Inverness Museum and Art Gallery –

High Life Highland (£9,500 sought) **APPROVED £9,500**

Valhalla - In Search of the Viking Dead' exhibition and events

Booklet B

The Sub-Committee **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** the following to the City of Inverness Area Committee (at its meeting on 1 December 2016) as they related to applications for more than £10,000:-

Blythswood Care (£20,000 sought) **APPROVED £20,000**

Highland Foodbank 2016

During discussion support was expressed for the application but there was concern that funding would go towards extra staff based in Evanton. In response, it was explained that the warehouse was based in Evanton but the benefit would be to the end users in Inverness. Members also commented that it would be unlikely to get similarly cost-effective premises in Inverness and that a lot of work was done at the Foodbank Centres in Hilton and Madras Street.

Community Action Raigmore Estate (CARE)

(£35,000 sought) **APPROVED £35,000**

New Skate Park

Revised financial information was tabled at the meeting, which included a quote for the Skate Park and a request for £20,000 from the Military Covenant Fund. During discussion, it was commented that the Skate Park at Bught Park was a huge success and another one on the East side of the City was welcomed. In relation to its location, it was confirmed that it would be positioned and built

using concrete to limit the impact to local residents and was on the cycle path near the Golden Bridge so would be easily accessible from other areas.

Booklet C

The Sub-Committee determined an application for partnership working as follows:-

Inverness BID (£54,800 sought)	APPROVED £54,800
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City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays 2017

Discussion took place on the importance of recognising the support from the Inverness Common Good Fund during which it was suggested that applicants be asked to provide details of any publicity undertaken, that a ceremony be organised for the Provost to present the applicant with a large cheque and that the logo for the Inverness Common Good Fund be redesigned to include an image of the Town House. It was **AGREED** to approve the application subject to the 2017 Budget for Partnership Working being in place. It was further **AGREED** to liaise with the Press Office to improve the publicity of grants over £10,000.

5. Operation Respect

There had been circulated Report No GSC/11/16 dated 1 October 2016 by the Inverness City Area Manager. The City of Inverness Area Committee had previously endorsed the planned activities of Operation Respect – City Centre. The Grants Sub-Committee was now asked to approve a contribution to the funding for activities from the Inverness Common Good Fund for the Project for Winter 2016/17.

The Inverness City Area Manager advised that he was awaiting confirmation from NHS Highland to fund the contribution from the Red Cross and Scottish Ambulance Service.

Members felt that all public sector organisations were facing budget pressures and that NHS Highland ought to provide a contribution for Operation Respect because it would reduce the impact on the Accident and Emergency Department at Raigmore Hospital and save money.

It was suggested that sponsorship could be sought, for example, by including the Inverness Common Good Fund logo on the flip-flops that were provided by Street Pastors. In this regard, it was advised that some in kind support was received from Tesco who had donated unsold flip-flops after Summer.

The Sub-Committee **APPROVED** funding of £8,348 for Operation Respect 2016/17.

6. Request for Extension to Grant Period

There had been circulated emails dated 2 September and 24 October 2016 from Stay Safe Highland, 19 August 2016 from Friends of Counselling

Inverness and 17 October 2016 from the Highland Rugby Football Club which all requested extensions to their grant period.

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to extend the grant period for the following:-

- i. Stay Safe Highland – to February 2017
- ii. Friends of Counselling Inverness – to 3 August 2017
- iii. Highland Rugby Football Club – to 31 March 2017.

7. Request for Amendment to Grant

There had been circulated an email dated 16 October 2016 from Inverness Fairtrade Group which requested approval to use part of their remaining grant under the promotion and advertising budgets to develop and maintain a website.

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to the request from Inverness Fairtrade Group to revise their project.

8. Civic Hospitality Requests

There had been circulated Report No GSC/12/16 dated 26 October 2016 by the Inverness City Area Manager which listed the applications received for Civic Hospitality from the Inverness Common Good Fund. A copy of the applications and supporting documentation had been circulated as Booklet C.

In response to Members questions, it was confirmed that the visit was a Very Very Important Person and that the funding for the Art Society of Inverness would come from next year's budget.

The Sub-Committee determined applications for civic hospitality as follows:-

<u>The Highland Council</u> VVIP Visit	AGREED £2,560
<u>The Art Society of Inverness</u> The Art Society of Inverness Annual Exhibition 2017	AGREED £2,000

9. Homologation of Civic Hospitality Requests

The Sub Committee **AGREED TO HOMOLOGATE** the decisions to award the following Civic Hospitality requests:-

- i. Meeting of the Convention of Highlands & Islands - £2,000
- ii. Augsburg Klinikum Visit - £1,026.57

10. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 30 January 2017 at 9.30 am.

The Sub Committee also **NOTED** that the future dates of the other 2017 meetings as Monday 4 April, Monday 21 August and Monday 6 November.

It was commented that the meeting on the 4 April 2017 would take place during purdah but that this applied to central government and local government were permitted to continue with their business whilst being mindful of the election.

The meeting ended at 10.40 am.