

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

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness City Arts Working Group** held in the First Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness, on Thursday, 29 May 2014, at 10.30 am.

Present:

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| Mr K Gowans (Chair) | Mr T Prag |
| Mrs B McAllister | Mr G Ross |

Officials in attendance:

Mr D Haas, Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement
Ms C Shankland, High Life Highland (Project Manager)
Ms L Lee, Committee Administrator

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence was intimated on behalf of Councillor I Brown, Mr S Blair, Creative Scotland (CS), and Mr C Howell, Project Design Unit Manager, Community Services.

2. Exclusion of the Public

The Working Group **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

Items 4 and 5 - Mr G Ross (non-financial).

4. Project Management Report

Declaration of Interest – Mr G Ross declared a non-financial interest in this item on the grounds of having a close relative who was a local artist, 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 his involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No ICArts 4/14 by the Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement dated 22 May 2014 providing an update on progress of the river Connections Project Programme (the Project Programme) to the Inverness City Arts Working Group (ICArts Working Group) for the provision of public art as part of the River Ness Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Projects

Gathering Place, Rest Spaces, Sculptural Destination, Trail

The Project Manager summarised progress since the previous meeting with regard to retendering and shortlisting for the Gathering Place, Rest Spaces and Sculptural Destination projects. Whilst the revised tendering procedure still required some further refinement, the process had been much improved and would be used for other similar projects. Shortlisted tenders for the above three projects, together with the shortlisted submission for the Trail Project, would be considered by the Evaluation Panel on 18 June. In response to Member questions, a strong assurance was given that the fall-back position as set out in the report was competent: i.e. should the Evaluation Panel be unable to award one or more of the remaining projects, interested artists who had missed the tender deadline could be contacted with a view to their work being considered and, if recommended by the Panel, approved by the Working Group. It would not be necessary to re-tender.

An additional meeting of the Working Group had been arranged for 20 June, to allow Members to consider the Evaluation Panel's recommendations. In anticipation that the chosen designs might be controversial/exciting/bold, and bearing in mind that CS was keen for all the projects to co-ordinate with each other and the flood works, Members requested that sufficient time be allowed for them to familiarise themselves fully with the recommended projects.

The timescale for submission of the Stage 2 funding application to CS by 30 June was short but achievable. The appointment of the artists would be announced once CS approval had been gained, after which there would be a period of public consultation.

River Connections

The Project Manager provided a verbal update: Mary Bourne had ordered materials and was liaising with the flood engineers as to when she would be able to start. Her work over the summer would provide an opportunity for school visits and communication with by-standers, which would contribute to meeting the educational and public involvement objectives of the project programme.

Information Display – Church Street

The Project Manager provided additional information on proposals for a display in the windows of a vacant property in Church Street with a view to stimulating public interest and engagement. In response to points raised in discussion, officers undertook to ensure that a contact telephone number would be provided in the display and that copies of the display would be emailed to Members for information.

Governance and Funding

Members of the Working Group and officers had met with Creative Scotland at the end of April. The meeting had been positive, with CS accepting the reasons for the delay, welcoming the benefits of the improved tendering process and expressing confidence in the project. £25,000 CS funding had recently been released to support development work. In discussion, officers

responded to points raised by Members, giving a strong assurance that the project was tightly governed and monitored: the Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement met frequently and regularly the Chair and with officers to discuss progress; Members had also been invited to a briefing on 16 May, at which a general update on the project had been provided.

Approval would be sought from the City of Inverness and Area Committee on 3 June, to release the balance of funding (£190,000) allocated from the Inverness Common Good Fund. Officers were confident that all questions raised at the Committee could be responded to clearly and positively. Officers would also work with the Council's press office to compile press releases as required, to publicise the benefits of the flood scheme, the arts projects and the funding attracted from outside bodies. There would be a press release once the artists had been approved by CS; the Chair encouraged all Members to be involved in this.

The Working Group **AGREED** that:

- i. in line with the process set out in the report, should the Evaluation Panel be unable to award one or more of the remaining projects, interested artists who had missed the tender deadline could be contacted with a view to their work being considered and if recommended by the Panel, approved by the Working Group; and
- ii. the meeting scheduled for 20 June start at 8.30am, rather than 10am, to allow sufficient time for Members to familiarise themselves fully with the projects recommended by the Panel.

The Working Group **NOTED**:

- i. the progress being made towards the appointment of Artists as recommended by the procurement Evaluation Panel and the refining of the procurement process for the following projects:
 - The Gathering Place
 - Rest Spaces
 - Sculptural Destination;
- ii. the progress being made on the appointment of an artist for the Trail;
- iii. the progress of the River Connections project;
- iv. the Timeline for the Stage 2 application to Creative Scotland; and
- v. that a telephone contact number would be included in the Church Street display vinyls, and that copies of these would be emailed to Members for information.

5. Financial Monitoring

Declaration of Interest – Mr G Ross declared a non-financial interest in this item on the grounds of having a close relative who was a local artist, 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 his involvement in the discussion.

There had been circulated Report No ICArts 5/14 by the Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement dated 22 May 2014 which set out

the revenue monitoring position for the period to 30 April 2014 and showed expenditure to date.

The report highlighted that the allocated budget from the Inverness Common Good Fund was £250,000 for 2014/15, and that £60,000 of this had been released by the CIAC for the River Connections project. £25,000 had also been received from Creative Scotland as a contribution to project development costs.

The Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement gave a brief explanation of the figures provided. A total of £718,000 funding had been raised. Although this was £22,000 short of the target figure, it would be possible to redesign aspects of the project such as the festival so that overall expenditure would remain within budget, without impacting on the projects. There would also be scope to reallocate sums between budget headings as necessary, including increasing funding for schools projects. In this regard, the Project Manager reported that the flood engineers had offered an opportunity to Inverness Royal Academy pupils to use the recently erected hoardings for street art. The Chair highlighted that such opportunities, if available, would also be of benefit to College students in the coming school year.

The Working Group **NOTED** the content of the report.

6. Minutes

There had been circulated and were **NOTED** the minutes of the Working Group held on 6 March 2014, as had been approved by the City of Inverness and Area on 3 June 2014.

7. Date of next Meeting

The Working Group **NOTED** that the next meeting was scheduled for Friday 20 June 2014, starting at 8.30 a.m.

The meeting ended at 11.15 a.m.