

**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 Friday, 20 June 2014, at 8.30 a.m.

Present:

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

Also in attendance:

Mr S Blair, Creative Scotland

Officials in attendance:

Mr D Haas, Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement
Mr C Howell, Project Design Unit Manager, Community Services
Ms C Shankland, Project Manager, High Life Highland
Mrs R Moir, Principal Committee Administrator, Corporate Development Service

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

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

Item 4 - Mr G Ross (non-financial).

4. River Ness Flood Alleviation Scheme Public Art Project

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 06/14 dated 13 June 2014 by the Acting Head of Community and Democratic Engagement inviting Members to consider the recommendations of the Evaluation Panel for the

procurement of artists for four River Connections Public Art Programme public art commissions, as detailed below, and to approve these, if satisfied. The report also outlined the different stages of the evaluation process which had led to these recommendations, including: the tender requirements published; the shortlisting by the Evaluation Panel; the Limited Design Competition for the shortlisted artists, involving presentations given to the Evaluation Panel the day before this meeting; and the weighting given to the various evaluation criteria when assessing the tenders/presentations. Mr S Blair confirmed that Creative Scotland was content with the process followed and the quality of the resulting recommendations.

The Working Group was reminded that the Stage 2 funding application had to be submitted to Creative Scotland by the end of June, and that the award of the remaining artist commissions was dependent on that submission being successful. Given the timescales involved, approval of successful tenders could therefore not be formally confirmed until September 2014 at the earliest.

The Working Group was also advised that, given the synergies involved, the Director of Development and Infrastructure had identified a further £40,000 that could be made available to the River Connections Public Art Programme from the Development and Infrastructure Service City Gateways Project budget. It would be important for the allocation of these funds within the Programme to align with the Gateways Project criteria.

Projects

i. The Gathering Place

The Working Group was advised that the Limited Design Competition in relation to the Gathering Place had been unavoidably delayed due to personal circumstances affecting a particular shortlisted artist. It was recommended that an alternative date for this presentation to the Evaluation Panel be arranged as soon as possible, and an additional early meeting of the Working Group convened to consider the recommendation on the Gathering Place project emerging from that process.

The Working Group **AGREED** to defer consideration of this project to a further meeting, likely to be in July, the details of this to be confirmed as soon as possible.

ii. The Sculptural Destination

The Working Group was advised that the Evaluation Panel had identified a recommended artist for the Sculptural Destination project, and was invited to authorise officers to enter into a negotiated discussion with this artist to agree the detail of the specific artwork.

A presentation showing examples of the artist's previous work was given to the Working Group, together with an outline of the creative process favoured by the artist, including a history of thorough research into the

place and context of each specific commission, and of engagement with local communities.

During discussion, emphasis was placed on the range, variety and quality of the past work and a welcome given to the focus on natural elements. Reassurance was sought and given that there was full appreciation by the artist of the limited maintenance resources available to the Council and the need for durability of the work.

The Working Group **NOTED**:

- a) the decision by the Evaluation Panel to negotiate with the chosen Artist for the Sculptural Destination Contract; and
- b) that the proposal, if agreed by the Evaluation Panel, would be presented to the Working Group for formal approval.

iii. **Artist-designed Rest Spaces**

The Working Group was advised that the Evaluation Panel had identified a recommended group of artists for the Rest Spaces project.

A copy of the relevant PowerPoint presentation to the Evaluation Panel was shown to the Working Group and further clarification given on the specific elements of the proposal and the overall artistic vision of connection with the river.

During discussion, Members welcomed the quality and effective simplicity of the proposals, their underlying coherence, and the scope for public interaction. Reassurance was again given concerning low maintenance durability.

The Working Group **APPROVED** the award of tender for the Rest Spaces Contract to the artists recommended by the Evaluation Panel.

iv. **The Trail**

The Working Group was advised that the Evaluation Panel had identified a recommended group of artists for the Trail project.

A copy of the relevant PowerPoint presentation to the Evaluation Panel was shown to the Working Group and further clarification given on the breadth of the proposal and its potential for further development into the future, particularly its online aspects.

During discussion, the innovation and flexibility of the proposals were welcomed, together with their scope for extension in terms of both time and place. They again had the merit of simplicity and coherence and demonstrated a clear vision of the overall Project.

The Working Group **APPROVED** the award of tender for the Trail Contract to the artists recommended by the Evaluation Panel.

v. **Coordinating Artist**

The Working Group **NOTED** that officers would assess the various appointed artists with a view to selecting which would be given the overall Project coordination brief, and would report back to the Working Group for formal approval.

vi. **Further Project**

Officers briefed the Working Group on an additional tender submitted for the Rest Spaces brief which, while it had not in the end been adjudged to comply with the tender brief, had nonetheless been rated highly by the Evaluation Panel as a good project with strong community engagement aspects.

Having been shown a copy of the relevant PowerPoint presentation to the Evaluation Panel, the Working Group **AGREED** that:

- a) officers investigate further the feasibility, in terms of funding and of integration with the main Project, of taking this proposal forward, and report back to the Working Group; and
- b) at the suggestion of Mr S Blair, the project be included within the Stage 2 submission to Creative Scotland.

5. **Minutes**

There had been circulated and were **NOTED** the minutes of the Working Group held on 29 May 2014.

6. **Date of next Meeting**

The Working Group **NOTED** that:

- a) the next meeting had been scheduled for Thursday, 7 August 2014, starting at 10.00 a.m.; and
- b) an additional meeting was expected to be called before then, whose details would be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 11.40 a.m., having adjourned from 10.10 a.m. to 10.35 a.m.