

## **The Highland Council**

**City of Inverness Area Committee – 3 March 2016**

Agenda Item	<b>7</b>
Report No	<b>CIA/9/16</b>

### **Scottish Open Golf Championships & Belladrum Music Festival 2016**

**Joint Report by Director of Development & Infrastructure and Inverness City Area Manager**

#### **Summary**

This report summarises previous involvement in and benefits from the Scottish Open Golf Championships and provides information in relation to plans for the forthcoming 2016 event. It also makes recommendations on activity designed to better manage arrangements for two other significant local events in summer 2016 – the Black Isle Show and the Belladrum Music Festival.

This activity contributes to delivering the “Highland First” commitment on building tourism – “The Council will strive to grow tourism by working with partners to retain and develop world class events and promote destination management.”

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Castle Stuart Golf Links hosted the Barclays Scottish Open Golf Championships in July 2011 and, with a new title sponsor Aberdeen Asset Management, again in July 2012 and July 2013. Under the terms of the agreement with the title sponsor the Championships then moved to Royal Aberdeen in 2014 before embarking on a “Scottish circuit” for the years 2015-17. Included in this arrangement was a commitment to return to Castle Stuart in one of these three years and this sees the event return to Inverness from 7 to 10 July 2016.

#### **2. Scottish Open Golf Championships 2011 to 2013**

- 2.1 The Scottish Open Golf Championships held at Castle Stuart in previous years saw considerable benefits brought to the local area – both through spend by competitors, event staff, media and spectators (with over 60,000 attending in 2013) and in terms of profile.
- 2.2 An economic impact assessment of the 2011 Scottish Open Championships showed that over the period of the event and in the lead up/ break down phases the local economy benefited by £3.8m with a further £370,000 spent elsewhere in the Highlands and Islands.

A further study into the impact of the 2012 event was carried out and while the different methodology used means figures are not directly comparable, this showed expenditure of £3.7m. In addition to direct expenditure, the television advertising and promotional value in each year was very significant with a potential audience reach of over 400 million households.

2.3 In addition to the activity at Castle Stuart, the Council also played a key role in event planning and ensuring that there was an appropriate welcome for visitors to the event. This work was mostly coordinated by the Multi-Agency Event Planning Team or a cross-Service Council group set up for the event. Activities included:

- Business briefings for local businesses in conjunction with Inverness BID
- Traffic management planning including provision of a shuttle bus service
- Provision of floral decorations and welcome banners to enhance the sense of welcome to Inverness; and
- Provision of additional evening entertainment in Inverness.

### **3. Funding for the Scottish Open Golf Championships 2016**

3.1 In previous years annual contributions of £33k were made from the Highland Culture Fund to enable Castle Stuart to host the Scottish Open Golf Championships with additional funding coming from EventScotland and Highlands & Islands Enterprise. Some initial discussions regarding the 2016 event have been held with organisers and other agencies but no formal request for funding has yet been submitted. However, in conjunction with the transfer of the previous Highland Culture Fund (now major Events Fund) to the Development & Infrastructure Service a report on how these funds might be used was presented to the Planning, Development & Infrastructure Committee on 18 February 2015 where in principle approval was given to providing funding to the 2016 Scottish Open Championships at a similar level to that offered in previous years.

### **4. Event Planning and support 2016**

4.1 As in previous years support for those planning the event will be provided and coordinated by the Multi-Agency Event Planning Team or a cross-Service Council group set up for the event.

4.2 When the Scottish Open Golf Championships were previously held in Inverness the City of Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group and Inverness BID worked to create a welcome in the City Centre as well as at principal points of entry to the City and, where appropriate, within the Landward Wards e.g. in the vicinity of the course. This was designed to both:

- give the visitor to the City clear indication that Inverness recognises the importance of the Championship and of the value the community places on the business it brings; and,
- make the local community feel they are important to its success and a part of any celebrations.

Recognising the importance of creating a welcome, it is again proposed that a range of City Centre events are organised and that work with Inverness BID will be undertaken in order to create a festival atmosphere in the City Centre for 2016. This work would include:-

- The erection of welcome banners in the City Centre in the lead up to and during the event.
- Additional provision of features such as floral displays at entry points to Inverness and, if appropriate, in other areas near the course.
- Traditional evening events in the city centre during the period of the event.

The costs of this are expected to be similar to previous years (£23k) and will not exceed this amount, with this proposed to be drawn from the Inverness Common Good Fund City Events and Promotions budget. As before, recognition will be given to the support by the Common Good Fund.

## **5. Belladrum Music Festival / Black Isle Show**

- 5.1 Another of the area's major events – the Belladrum Music Festival which attracts 15,000 to 20,000 people and brings a significant economic benefit to the area, will again take place in summer 2016. The festival will again following the 3 day format first used in 2015. The fact that the 2015 Belladrum festival began on the same day as the principal day of the nearby Black Isle Show caused significant levels of road congestion and delays. With the two events again overlapping on the opening day of the Belladrum festival further planning for 2016 is required.
- 5.2 Organisers of the Belladrum festival have already indicated that car parks and camping areas will open early next year in an effort to avoid a repeat of last summer's traffic problems. Following further meetings regarding the two events in November 2015 it has been recommended that a traffic modelling study is carried out to identify the best solution for 2016. The expected cost of this work is £3,000 and it is recommended that this be drawn from the Inverness Common Good Fund. This type of assistance was given to the first Scottish Open Golf Championship at Castle Stuart in 2011 and led to a successful Traffic Management Plan being implemented.

## **6. Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 The major events described above and the proposed City Centre events are all designed to be accessible to all.

## **7. Resource Implications**

- 7.1 The Council anticipates providing funding from the Development & Infrastructure Service's Major Events Fund to support the 2016 Scottish Open Golf Championships. The exact amount of this has yet to be clarified and will be subject to further discussions with the organisers and submission of a formal application.

## **8. Climate Change, Rural, Legal and Risk implications**

- 8.1 There are no Legal or Risk implications arising as a result of this report.

## **Recommendation**

The Committee is invited to:-

- i. endorse the activity detailed in the report and recognise the positive economic impact that the previous Scottish Open Golf Championships in 2011, 2012 and 2013 had on both the city and the Highlands; and
- ii. agree to commit up to a maximum of £23,000 from the Inverness Common Good Fund towards enhancing the City's welcome for the 2016 Scottish Open Golf Championships.
- iii. agree to commit up to £3,000 from the Inverness Common Good Fund towards traffic modelling for the day when the Belladrum music Festival and Black Isle Show overlap.

Designation: Director of Development & Infrastructure      Designation: Inverness City Area Manager

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