

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in 1st Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Monday 13 February 2017 at 09.30 am.

Present:

Highland Council

Mr I Brown
Mr F Parr
Mr G Ross

Other Representatives

Mr M Smith, Manager, Inverness BID

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
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 F Parr in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

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

It was noted that the Hotels Association would appoint a new representative in due course.

2. 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.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 7 November 2016 which were **NOTED**.

5. Matter Arising

In relation to Item 8 Sponsorship Report Update, the Events Manager confirmed that the issues raised during discussion at the previous meeting would be included in a report which would be presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 14 September 2017.

In relation to Item 11 Inverness British Legion and following the meeting between the Provost and Sir Alistair Irwin regarding the arrangements for the Armed Forces Day Flag Raising Ceremony, the Events Manager advised that the City of Inverness Area Committee would now be held on 16 June 2017 and therefore the Flag Raising Ceremony would be arranged for 17 June 2017.

In relation to Item 5 Events Sponsorship / Support – Options for Change, Mr M Smith commented that he had not received a copy of the presentation due to be circulated to Members. In response, the Inverness City Area Manager confirmed he would arrange for the presentation to be emailed to Mr M Smith.

6. Events Managers Report

An update was provided by the Events Manager on the following areas:-

Events Advisory Group

The Events Advisory Group, a newly established partnership group working with various partners at HIE, was making good progress consolidating the procedures for ensuring that details of incoming events and conferences was collated and available in order to ensure the best possible support was given to event and conference organisers by agencies and other partners. The move towards a “one stop shop” approach had also enable work to commence on the redesign of the events section of the Inverness Loch Ness Tourism BID’s website. A diary of the events for 2017 was circulated. In addition, it was further explained that this would allow for opportunities and problems to be more easily identified at an early stage than before; and would improve collaborative working between partners. The next stage was to categorise events and work with Loch Ness Tourism BID.

During discussion, Members queried whether this would be time-consuming for the Events Manager and in response he explained that this approach was more efficient and would improve processes and greatly improve the flow of information between partners. Furthermore, clarification was sought, and received, that Inverness BID were invited to attend the Events Advisory Group.

Inverness British Legion

The Events Manager provided details of the arrangements for the Armed Forces Day Flag Raising Ceremony that the Inverness British Legion had agreed at the meeting hosted by the Provost and attended by Sir Alistair Irwin and officials from the Legion.

Inverness Highland Games / Gala Weekend

It was noted that discussions with Inverness Rotary to use the marquees at Bught Park on Highland Games and Gala weekend had not led to the submission of an application as the Rotarians had requested a finishing time that could not be accommodated. Birchwood Highland had put forward an alternative proposal with a 10.00 pm finish.

During discussion, Councillor Ross commented that Ballifeary Community Council were aware of the programme of events being developed at Bught Park and did not object providing the hours of operation took into consideration the number of young families living in the area; and the same arrangements continued to be made as at previous events regarding parking. It was also suggested that the Community Councils on the other side of the river be consulted.

Inverness Concerts

The Events Manager outlined the progress with ticket sales for UB40, Bryan Adams and Olly Murs and the work being undertaken in partnership with Les Kidger, LCC Live and High Life Highland to achieve economies of scale.

The updates were **NOTED** and in relation to the Events Advisory Group, the work in progress was **NOTED** and it was **AGREED** that further information including membership and protocol be presented to the next meeting.

7. Hogmanay 2017

An update was provided by the Events Manager on the Hogmanay Concert which had been successfully stage without incident. He highlighted the positive feedback that had been received from the media and the public and from the bands who had taken part in the event. He provided an overview of the line-up for the 2017 event and advised that a band had made an approach to perform at the 2018 event. It was agreed that the public announcement of the 2017 event's line-up would take place earlier.

During discussion, Members requested that the 2017 bands be asked to consider a request to include more singalongs in their sets if possible. Members also requested that consideration be given to increasing the entertainment during the breaks between bands.

Thereafter, the update was **NOTED**.

8. Spring Festival

The Events Manager reported that he was now looking at the launch of a Spring Festival which would consist of a package of new and existing events for 2018. A list of the events for the proposed Spring Festival and the current Summer and Winter Festivals was circulated.

Members discussed the potential for a Spring Festival and noted the work being undertaken to support the Inverness Music Festival by the Council; and we briefed on the visit undertaken to the SPECTRA Festival in Aberdeen.

Thereafter, the position was **NOTED**.

9. Caledonian Canal 2022 Update

An update was provided by the Events Manager during which he explained that 2022 was the bicentenary year of the completion of the Caledonian Canal and provided details of the research he had undertaken to see if it was possible to replicate the event which marked the Canal's opening in 1822. He advised the Working Group that 2022 had been highlighted as having significant potential for Event Tourism. Other bicentenary events in 2022 included the staging of the first Highland Games in Inverness; as well as the Highland Show, the visit of King George IV to Edinburgh and the opening of the Union Canal. Discussion had taken place with Russell Thomson, Scottish Canals who was keen to work in partnership; and Events Scotland and Sail Scotland had recognised the potential for 2022 to be a 'Year of Waterways' with the opening of the Caledonian Canal as a signature event.

In discussion, Members highlighted that the World Canals Conference in Inverness was highly attended from people all over the world which showed the potential that a celebration of the bicentenary of the Caledonian Canal had.

The Working Group **NOTED** the update and expressed support for work being undertaken in relation to Caledonian Canal 2022.

10. Feedback from Spectators

Feedback received from spectators and the media on events had been reported previously during the meeting.

11. Budget

An update was provided at the meeting by the Events Manager during which he presented the actual expenditure for the period ending 31 January 2017 and forecasted an underspend in the 2016/17 budget. It was also confirmed that, as agreed, the actual expenditure would be included in the Inverness Common Good Fund Financial Monitoring Report to be presented to the next meeting of the City of Inverness Area Committee.

During discussion, Members noted that the cost for the Halloween and Winter Wonderland events had been slightly higher than estimated due to the provision of additional and replacement lighting and it was agreed that the budget for the next financial year would be adjusted to reflect the changes made. These increases had been achieved by savings made elsewhere during the course of the year and the forecast of an underspend was welcomed by all.

Thereafter, the position was **NOTED**.

12. Report to City Committee for 2018/19 Budget

The Event Manager provided a summary of the contents of the report that would be made to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 14 September 2017. It was also highlighted that partnership work was improving.

The position was **NOTED**.

13. Date of Next Meeting

It was **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place following the Election on 4 May 2017 and that updates would be circulated to Members via email during purdah.

The meeting ended at 11.00 am.