

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Town House, Inverness on Thursday 22 November 2018 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Mr R Balfour	Mr K Gowans
Mr B Boyd	Mr A Graham
Mr I Brown	Mr J Gray
Mrs C Caddick	Mr A Jarvie
Miss J Campbell	Mrs I MacKenzie
Mrs H Carmichael	Mr D Macpherson
Mr A Christie	Mr R MacWilliam
Mr G Cruickshank	Mrs T Robertson
Mrs M Davidson	Mr G Ross

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Yule, Depute Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources
Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager
Ms U Lee, Urban Designer
Mr R Gerring, Transport Planning Manager
Mr G McCormick, Senior Environmental Health Officer
Mr B Cameron, Housing Policy and Investment Manager
Mr J Henderson, Housing Investment Officer
Ms S McKandie, Benefits and Welfare Manager
Mr S Manning, Principal Traffic Officer
Mrs L Dunn, Principal Administrator
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator

Also in attendance:

Mr P Strachan, Chair, Inverness BID
Mr M Smith, Manager, Inverness BID
Mr G Morrison, Group Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Ms F McNally, Programme Manager, Inverness City Active Travel Network, HITRANS

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to Committee.

Mrs H Carmichael in the Chair

Preliminaries

Prior to commencing the meeting, the Chairman made the following announcements:-

- Condolences were expressed in respect of Ms Molly Doyle, former Inverness City Councillor, who had recently passed;

- Children's Services Worker at the 'The Bridge' in Inverness, Ms Jenny Graham, was congratulated for her wonderful world record breaking success for circumnavigating the globe unaided on a bicycle, and a civic reception would be held in recognition of this significant achievement. The Committee also offered their congratulations; and
- Appreciation was expressed for the Civic and Facilities Team for their work in organising and preparing for the wide range of civic functions held at the Town House.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Ms E Knox, Mr R Laird, Mrs B McAllister and Mr C Smith.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

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

Item 5 – Mr K Gowans (non-financial)

Item 7 – Mr A Jarvie (non-financial)

Item 11 – Miss J Campbell, Mr J Gray and Mr R MacWilliam (all non-financial)

3. Yearly Annual Report on Inverness Business District

There had been circulated Report No CIA/47/18 dated 6 November 2018 by Inverness City Area Manager. The report was supported by a presentation by the Chairman of Inverness BID during which the Committee was provided with a progress update; details of the member representation and Board structure; the mission statement and how this translated into two principal thrusts (operational and strategic) and the four key pillars of the operational Business Plan 2018-2023. In conclusion, he advised of the third term platform for growth; emphasised the critical importance of partnership working; and confirmed that major opportunities would continue to be leveraged.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- The Committee commended Inverness BID and the Ambassadors for their exemplary work to date, it was recognised that Inverness BID was an important interface between the business and public sectors, and details of their achievements should be better promoted. However, it was essential that work continued to build on these successes to date and a number of suggestions for improvement were made including seeking increased representation from the building sector and improved engagement with the third sector which would bring added value; maximising opportunities to increase student accommodation; identifying alternative solutions to reduce the usage of single use plastics and improving/reducing litter; increase footfall in the Victorian Market and extended shop opening hours. In addition, there was a need for a proactive approach to be adopted with landlords to encourage investment in their asset and remind them of their civic duties to

maintain and enhance local buildings as well as their statutory responsibilities in terms of safety;

- It was highlighted that in the past the BID and Business collection rates were approximately at the same level (96%) but concern was expressed that the BID collection rate had reduced by approximately 8% and this needed to be addressed by BID as the Council could not enforce collection;
- The importance of partnership working was recognised and it was suggested that there was a need to work with the Council to develop a shared vision and align strategic goals and outcomes which could be included in the Council's Programme;
- The establishment of a multi-agency group to take the station development forward via a phased approach was welcomed;
- There was a need to capitalise on the cultural heritage of the City and the redevelopment of Castle Hill which was an area of significant importance to the whole of Scotland. This was a major opportunity and the V&A Dundee was referenced as an excellent example of the benefits that could be achieved from such a project; and
- Engagement and support was sought from BID to work beyond the City Centre and in particular to improve the gateway to the City at Millburn Road by reducing litter and removing excess bins.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to endorse the work detailed in the report; and
- ii. **NOTED** the presentation provided by Inverness BID representatives and the ongoing development of partnership working.

4. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Area Performance Summary
Seirbheis Smàlaidh agus Teasairginn na h-Alba – Geàrr-chunntas Coileanadh Sgìreil

There had been circulated Report No CIA/48/18 dated 1 November 2018 by the Local Senior Officer for Highland.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- Further information was sought and provided on the types of Deliberate Fires that had been attended during Quarters 1 and 2 and whether there was any trend in regard to repeat offenders;
- Confirmation was provided that there was engagement with carers and NHS Highland should concerns be raised as a result of attending Accidental Dwelling Fires in regard to elderly or vulnerable people coping at home;
- The Service was commended for their educational work with local estate and landowners and the success of this was evident from the report statistics. However, concern was expressed at the increasing numbers of deliberate fires at Dores Beach being left unattended, and further engagement with the very proactive local community council in regard to keeping the beach safe and clean was requested;
- Concern was expressed at the high level and associated costs of Unwanted False Alarm Signals and there was a need to educate the staff of the hospital and medical premises involved in order to reduce these incidents; and

- Retained Firefighters were utilised at many rural fire stations and difficulties in attracting new recruits which was often due to the residential training course requirement were emphasised. It was therefore suggested that attendance of this training should be subsidised by the Scottish Government to enable increased take-up.

The Committee scrutinised and **NOTED** the City of Inverness Performance Report for Q1 and Q2 of 2018-19 as circulated.

5. Delivering Local Priorities – City of Inverness and Area Prìomhachasan Baile Inbhir Nis

Declaration of Interest: Mr K Gowans declared a non-financial interest in this item as an employee of Inverness College/UHI 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 Joint Report No CIA/49/18 dated 31 October 2018 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure and Inverness City Area Manager.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- The Committee welcomed the City Priorities document which they felt was most helpful and it was suggested that a more holistic approach was required in regard to deer management facilities;
- In terms of transport, a review was required as the existing infrastructure was failing to cope and keep up with increasing housing levels and volumes of traffic. It was felt that roads and infrastructure priorities should be developed at a strategic level and development of a visual interpretation would be a helpful aid for this process;
- The desperate need for in-door sports facilities was emphasised and the provision of these via the UHI campus was welcome and it was further recommended that developer contributions should be sought to assist in alleviating these types of pressures;
- There was scope to increase student accommodation and this should be encouraged; and
- With regard to working with partners to deliver more affordable housing, it was queried whether consideration had been given to developing a homeless village, similar to that being developed in Edinburgh. And in terms of City Regeneration and in view of the high level of visitor numbers, it was suggested that a full review should be undertaken of the City provision of public conveniences.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the links between the Council’s Programme and the City Priorities; and
- ii. the progress being made on delivering the City Priorities and related projects; and

- iii. a response would be provided to Councillor J Campbell from the relevant officers on the points raised in regard to the feasibility of a homeless village and the suggestion of undertaking a full review of the City provision of public conveniences.

6. **activeinverness: Wayfinding Strategy for Inverness City Centre** **Pròiseactan Wayfinding**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/50/18 dated 8 November 2018 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- The Committee welcomed this initiative with positive comments being made in regard to the clear, informative and attractive signage system and use of the monoliths was encouraged. The added value that this would bring to the community was also highlighted;
- Further information was sought and provided in regard to total project costs and it was queried whether funding would be sought from external sources such as the Smart City funding, and assurance was provided that third party funding would be sought to finance the delivery of the project;
- It was suggested that English should be placed in a more prominent place to Gaelic, however it was highlighted that this did not align with the Council's policy which gave equal provenance to both languages; and
- Confirmation was sought and provided that the signs would be dementia friendly.

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** that the Wayfinding Strategy for Inverness City Centre at Appendix 1 of the report be adopted by the Council as a Non-Statutory Planning Advice Note;
- ii. **NOTED** the comments received during the public consultation on the Wayfinding Strategy for Inverness City Centre;
- iii. **AGREED** the recommended Council responses contained in Appendix 4 of the report; and
- iv. **AGREED** that officers would use all reasonable endeavours to ensure third party funding opportunities were used to deliver the full project.

7. **Riverside Way – Way Forward** **Pròiseact Dealbhaidh Slighe na h-Aibhne**

Declaration of Interest: Mr A Jarvie declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Director of High Life Highland 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 Joint Report No CIA/51/18 dated 7 November 2018 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure and the Chief Executive of High Life Highland.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- Although supportive of the aspirations of the project, concerns were expressed at the details contained therein. It was felt that the one-way system would result in higher volumes of traffic and more could be done to minimise speeds and eliminate the through traffic which should be a key objective of the project. It was also felt that there had been a missed opportunity to further enhance the area and it was suggested that the funding was not being spent to maximum advantage as more could be achieved in return for the investment, i.e. the development of a riverside esplanade area. It was felt that alternative options must be considered and should include consultation with locals. In conclusion, this was an iconic area which should reclaim a small part of the City from traffic and it was felt that the project failed to demonstrate how active travel should be delivered;
- In contrast, it was felt that this was a comprehensive report and appreciation was extended to officers for their work in this regard. It was felt that the project would be of significant benefit for local residents and users of the Bught Park as well as a major improvement along the riverside whilst promoting active travel. Following a number of meetings, the Bught Area Stakeholder Group had raised a number of potential solutions to improve access and ease traffic congestion and these had been recognised by the traffic consultants AECOM. In response to the concerns raised by local residents, it was suggested that the project would enhance connection, improve cycle and pedestrian access and ultimately safety. These improvements combined with the reduced traffic as result of the West Link would improve traffic flow;
- Concern was expressed that there had been a deficiency of local democracy in regard to this initiative in that community councils/groups were not being informed and stakeholder groups had not included local residents. Concerns had been expressed by residents and meaningful engagement should be undertaken with locals prior to further progression of the project. Although supportive of the project in principle, local stakeholders had to be given a voice and it would therefore be beneficial to delay the project to allow these views to be taken on board and an informed decision could be made thereafter;
- An alternative to the one-way system was not being explored and a strategic traffic management system was required for the whole of the City;
- The current area/system was hostile to cyclists and the proposal was welcome which was felt would be user-friendly for tourists and pedestrians as well as cyclists;
- In regard to the riverside area, concern was expressed that at some points the low railings were too low and it was queried whether the street lighting would be adequate;
- Concern was expressed that the width of the carriageway along the one-way system would not be sufficient and it was requested that early consideration be given to the exit route from Ballifeary Road to ensure that there was not a build-up of traffic, e.g. left turn only;

- It was highlighted that this project was good news and should be embraced. It was felt that the progress of the project should not be subject to further delay as there would be a formal statutory consultation process as the project continued and this would be the appropriate time for engagement with local residents and detailed concerns would be addressed as part of this process in order to achieve a balanced solution. It was also highlighted that there had been strong support for this project by both residents and users;
- Concern was expressed that implementation of a one-way system would facilitate increased traffic volume and user speed despite a 20 mph speed limit;
- The difficulties in regard to access in and around Ballifeary Road and the increasing volumes of car parking in this area were raised; and
- Clarification was sought and provided that there was no commitment to Option A and that Option C could be reinstated at a later date.

Mr B Boyd **MOVED** a **MOTION** that a meeting be called with invites being extended to community groups and stakeholders to resolve community concerns prior to approval of Recommendation 2.ii and 2.iv of the report and these recommendations be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee to allow the meeting with the community to take place.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr G Ross, seconded by Mrs T Robertson, moved the recommendations as outlined in the report.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 4 votes and **AMENDMENT** received 13 votes with one abstention and the **AMENDMENT** was therefore **CARRIED** the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mr K Gowans and Mr R MacWilliam

For the Amendment:

Mr R Balfour, Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Mr G Cruickshank, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr D Macpherson, Mrs T Robertson, and Mr G Ross.

Abstentions:

Mr A Jarvie

Decision

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the contents of the report, including the background, engagement and feedback;
- ii. **AGREED** that it be delegated to the Director of Development and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Provost and Depute Provost, to prepare and publish a series of Draft Road Traffic Regulation Orders covering the following proposals:
 - a. Inverness Riverside Area 20mph Speed Limit Order
 - b. Inverness Riverside - Ness Walk and Bught Road One Way Order

- c. Inverness Riverside – Ness Walk and Bught Road Redetermination Order
- d. Inverness Riverside Area Event Traffic Management Order and to make the orders where there were no valid sustained objections;
- iii. **NOTED** that where there were valid and sustained objections an update report would be submitted to a future Committee; and
- iv. subject to the making of the Road Traffic Regulation Orders, **AGREED** that it be delegated to the Director of Development and Infrastructure to further develop and implement the works associated with implementing the Road Traffic Regulation Orders.

At this point, the meeting was adjourned at 1.10 pm and reconvened at 1.45 pm.

8. Inverness City Centre Trade Waste Policy Poileasaidh Sgudal Malairt Meadhan Baile Inbhir Nis

There had been circulated Report No CIA/52/18 dated 1 November 2018 by the Director of Community Services.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- Members commended the policy and the resultant reduction in trade waste bins which had made a significant difference in the city centre with limited resources;
- information was sought, and provided, on the potential to extend the policy to other parts of Inverness and Highland, and the associated cost implications. The Senior Environmental Health Officer having explained that it was not necessary to introduce the policy to apply the same legislation and that it was considered better use of resources to tackle businesses in areas such as the Crown, Tomnahurich Street etc on a case by case basis, Members welcomed the assurance that measures were in place and that the public would not move from a clean zone to a litter-strewn zone;
- the need for vigilance, to ensure the reduction in bins was maintained, was emphasised;
- thanks were expressed to the Senior Environmental Health Officer and his team for their efforts, and the conciliatory manner in which the policy had been implemented;
- for both environmental and economic reasons, it would be helpful to implement a wider policy that covered not only trade waste in the city centre but overall litter and waste reduction, and encouraged both businesses and residents to recycle more. The Senior Environmental Health Officer undertook to discuss the matter with waste colleagues; and
- Members were encouraged to report any issues in their wards to the Senior Environmental Health Officer.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the results of the public consultation and review of the Trade Waste Policy as outlined within the report; and
- ii. **APPROVED** the recommendation to extend the time for the morning uplift window within the Trade Waste Policy as detailed within the report.

**9. Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2019-2021
Prògram Calpa Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Taigheadais 2019-2021**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/53/18 dated 5 November 2018 by the Director of Community Services.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- thanks were expressed to the Housing Policy and Investment Manager and the Housing Investment Officer for their assistance in responding to Members' queries;
- the data in the report was crucial in terms of enabling Members to update constituents on housing upgrades; and
- the "on demand" option, which allowed individual dwellings that had been identified as requiring works to be upgraded, was welcomed.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the allocation of resources to Inverness Area as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- ii. **NOTED** the investment priorities as set out in section 4.2 of the report;
- iii. **AGREED** the proposed two year HRA Capital Programme for Inverness for 2019-21 as set out in Appendix 2 of the report; and
- iv. **NOTED** that updates on the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme would continue to be provided through ward briefings.

**10. Inverness and Nairn Local Access Forum Appointments
Cur an Dreuchd gu Fòram Inntrigidh Ionadail Inbhir Nis agus Inbhir Narann**

The Inverness City Area Manager explained that this item had been withdrawn due to Appendix 1 of the report being incomplete, and that it would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

**11. Inverness Townscape Heritage Project
Pròiseact Dualchais Cruth-baile Inbhir Nis**

Declarations of Interest: Miss J Campbell and Mr R MacWilliam declared non-financial interests in this item as Members of the City Heritage Trust and the Townscape Heritage Partnership Grants Sub-Committee, and Mr J Gray declared a non-financial interest as Chair of the City Heritage Trust but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude their involvement in the discussion.

The Inverness Townscape Heritage Project had been established to encourage regeneration of the historic built environment within Academy Street to improve the quality of life for those people who lived, worked and visited there and businesses that traded there. The Townscape Heritage Project Partnership, which consisted of a Partnership Board and Grants Sub-Committee, had been

set up to direct and monitor the 5 year delivery and implementation phase from January 2016 to January 2021.

The Partnership Board was chaired by the Highland Council and:-

- directed activity and monitored progress to fulfil the objectives of the project in accordance with the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Environment Scotland grant terms; and
- provided effective liaison with their representative bodies and acted as ambassador for the Townscape Heritage Project.

The Grants Sub-committee:-

- received and evaluated grant applications and officer recommendations; and
- agreed and submitted recommendations on all grant applications for the Townscape Heritage Partnership's consideration and determination.

Following the resignation of Mr R Laird, the Committee was invited to appoint one Member as Chair of the Townscape Heritage Partnership Board.

Nominations were received for Mr J Gray and Mr R MacWilliam.

Clarification having been sought, it was explained that an appointment to the Townscape Heritage Partnership Grants Sub-Committee would only be required in the event Mr R MacWilliam, who was a Member of the Sub-Committee, was appointed as Chair of the Partnership Board.

On a vote being taken, Mr Gray received 11 votes and Mr MacWilliam received 3 votes, with 3 abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:-

Votes for Mr Gray

Mr R Balfour, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr A Christie, Mr G Cruickshank, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Graham, Mr A Jarvie, Mr D MacPherson, Mrs T Robertson and Mr G Ross.

Votes for Mr MacWilliam

Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown and Mr K Gowans.

Abstentions

Mrs C Caddick, Mrs I MacKenzie and Mr R MacWilliam.

Decision

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr J Gray as Chair of the Townscape Heritage Partnership Board.

**12. Appointments to Sub-Committee, Working Groups etc
Cur an Dreuchd gu Fo-Chomataidhean, Buidhnean-obrach is eile**

Following the resignation of Mrs E McAllister, the Committee was invited to appoint one Member to the following Working Groups:-

i. Inverness City Arts Working Group

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr I Brown.

ii. Events and Festivals Working Group

Nominations were received for Mr D Macpherson and Mrs I MacKenzie.

Mrs T Robertson having indicated her intention to stand down, the Committee **NOTED** that there were now two vacancies and **AGREED** to appoint Mr D Macpherson and Mrs I MacKenzie.

**13. Inverness Airport Consultative Committee
Comataidh Cho-chomhairleachaidh Port-adhair Inbhir Nis**

The Committee **NOTED** that the Provost had been invited to attend this group which acted as a liaison between the community and airport management.

**14. Homologation of New Street Names
Aontachadh Ainmean Ùra Sràide**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/55/18 dated 8 February 2018 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

The Committee **AGREED** to homologate the naming of new streets for the new housing developments in the Ness-side, Hilton, Culloden and Smithton areas of Inverness as detailed in the report.

**15. Inverness Common Good Fund
Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis**

**(a) Inverness Common Good Fund Annual Report 2017/18
Aithisg Bhliadhnail Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis 2017/18**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/56/18 dated 1 November 2018 by the Director of Corporate Resources/Deputy Chief Executive and the Inverness City Area Manager.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- information was sought on the year on year percentage growth of the investment portfolio and it was requested that a report in that regard be presented to the next meeting of the Committee; and
- information was sought, and provided, on how the funding allocated to the Disabled Go Project had been expended, and it was confirmed that the outcome of the project would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the final monitoring report and balance sheet for the Inverness Common Good Fund as at 31 March 2018;
- ii. **AGREED** that the outcome of the Disabled Go project be reported to the next meeting of the Committee; and
- iii. **AGREED** that a report on the Common Good investment portfolio, including the year on year percentage growth, be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

**(b) Financial Monitoring
Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/57/18 dated 5 November 2018 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

During discussion, information was sought, and provided, on the Conference Support budget and how it contributed to conference promotion.

The Committee otherwise **NOTED** the financial monitoring report to 1 November 2018 and that overall expenditure was within agreed budgets.

**(c) Grants and Capital Projects
Tabhartasan agus Pròiseactan Calpa**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/58/18 dated 12 November 2018 by the Inverness City Area Manager. A copy of supporting documentation had been circulated separately as Booklet A.

The Committee:-

- i. **APPROVED** the following applications for funding:

- Blythswood Care - £20,000
- The Shirly Project - £24,200; and

AGREED TO REJECT the following application:

- Activness Ltd - £13,200

- ii. **APPROVED** the application from Inverness BID for £59,777 towards the City of Inverness Annual Floral Displays 2019;
- iii. scrutinised and **NOTED** the current status of capital projects;
- iv. **AGREED** to the transfer of £35,250 from the Conference Support Budget to the Grants Budget; and
- v. **AGREED** the extra costs incurred of £9,358 for the Ness Islands Bridge Work, to be funded from the Other Properties Budget.

**16. Discretionary Scheme for Winter Payments 2019/20
Sgeama Pàigheadh Geamhraidh – Ath-sgrùdadh**

There had been circulated Joint Report No CIA/59/18 dated 13 November 2018 by the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources and Inverness City Area Manager.

In introducing the report, the Benefits and Welfare Manager drew attention to paragraph 4.3 and recommended that the timescale in relation to Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grants be extended to 28 February, as it had in previous years, rather than 31 January as set out in the report.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- information was sought, and provided, on the proposed change in criteria referred to in recommendation vi;
- the user-friendly application process was welcomed;
- it was highlighted that the Council had won the Benefits and Welfare Reform Team of the Year Award, a UK-wide award, at the prestigious Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation Performance Awards 2018, and Members commended the Benefits and Welfare Manager for her contribution in that regard;
- the Benefits and Welfare team did as much as possible to ensure that Highland residents got the support they needed, the Winter Payments Scheme being an example, and their positive relationship with local Citizens Advice Bureaux was commended;
- whilst the scheme would not solve fuel poverty, the support it provided to vulnerable people was to be welcomed and the need for Members to promote it to their constituents was emphasised;
- in relation to the pie chart setting out 2017/18 payments by ward, it would be helpful if information could be overlaid to show the geographic distribution across the city. In addition, whilst Inverness Central ward indisputably had the highest levels of deprivation in the city, the chart appeared to be disproportionate and it was suggested that more work was needed in other wards to ensure that uptake was maximised. It was added that every village in the Aird and Loch Ness ward, which had the least uptake, had people on low income and living in fuel poverty in isolated houses in the country. In responding to the points raised, the Benefits and Welfare Manager queried whether it would be helpful, in the next report to Committee in May 2019, to provide not only more granular data but a comparison with Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. Members confirmed that this would be helpful and Mr G Ross, Chair of Inverness Community Partnership, added that it would also assist the Community Partnership as it developed locality plans;
- given that Scotland was one of the most energy-rich countries in the world, concern was expressed that fuel poverty had not been effectively tackled. However, it was recognised that there was a significant amount of good work taking place; and
- in terms of promoting the scheme, it was suggested that consideration be given to video clips or podcasts that could be posted on the Council website and shared on social media.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** the following recommendations for the 2019/20 Inverness Winter Payments Discretionary Scheme:-

- i. an increase in a single tier payment from £82 to be made in accordance with the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to those applicants that satisfied the eligibility criteria for the 2019/20 scheme. This was the only increase in payment recommended and would be submitted to the June 2019 Committee for Members' consideration;
- ii. there was an anticipated increase in budget from £132,000 to take into account the anticipated CPI increase which might result in an increase in payment for 2019/20. The recommendation for the budget for 2019/20 would be presented at the City of Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee in June 2019;
- iii. the criteria to be utilised for the 2019/20 scheme as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4 of the report, subject to the timescale in paragraph 4.3 in relation to Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grants being extended to 28 February 2020. As set out in Appendix 2 of the report, in addition to a one-off discretionary payment from The Inverness Winter Payments Scheme, the same recipients might also be eligible for:
 - **£300** maximum payment from the UK Government's Winter Fuel Payment;
 - **£25** for each 7 day period where the criteria was met for the UK Government's Cold Weather Payments; and
 - **£140** Warm Home Discount from the household's utility bill.
- iv. this discretionary scheme was to be made available to residents in the City of Inverness and the landward areas of the seven city wards;
- v. to promote payment by BACS for this scheme as this was the most secure method of payment for recipients of the payment and the Council alike;
- vi. a change to the criteria resulting in a higher number of qualifying applicants and an increase to the payment amount (in addition to the anticipated CPI increase) would mean an increase in the budget. Payment for this scheme was coupled with the level of payments made via the UK Government's schemes as set out in recommendation iii. above. Officers' recommendations were to adopt the criteria detailed in Section 4 of the report and increase the payment in line with the CPI increase; and
- vii. to manage all related expenditure in a manner that safeguarded the Common Good Fund's assets and ensured this important scheme remained sustainable.

It was further **AGREED** that:-

- viii. opportunities for additional promotion, including videos and podcasts, be explored; and
- ix. the report to Committee in May 2019 should include ward level statistics in comparison with SIMD Index data.

17. Traffic Order Amendments Atharrachaidhean Òrdughan Traftaig

There had been circulated Report No CIA/60/18 dated 9 November 2018 by the Director of Community Services.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- in relation to the introduction of permit zones, Members cited an example of a young person living in the city centre being unable to obtain a parking permit, and information was sought on the plan for the streets not in the specified zones. It having been explained that there were no permit streets in the core streets in the city centre, Members commented that that, and the suggested solution of contract parking in Rose Street car park at a cost £63 per month, seemed harsh given that the Council wanted to encourage young people to move into the city centre to make it more vibrant. It was added that Rose Street car park was not heavily used overnight and there were opportunities to be more creative out of hours. Also, many of the buildings people were being encouraged to live in were older and did not have developer contributions. Mrs C Caddick undertook to liaise with the Principal Traffic Officer outwith the meeting regarding the points raised;
- with regard to Decriminalised Parking Enforcement, information was sought on the streets with the highest levels of offences and it was confirmed that a breakdown would be circulated to Members of the Committee;
- in relation to Eden Court Theatre car park, Members commented that people would be happier to pay the parking charges if they knew that the income generated was going to the theatre and the promotion of the arts. Further information having been sought in that regard, it was confirmed that 80% of the net income went directly to the theatre, the remaining 20% covering maintenance of equipment, charges relating to cash collection etc. Income generated from the Council car park was corporate revenue; and
- Members having raised the issue of people parking in loading bays in the city centre overnight and on Sundays, information was provided on the current restrictions, the potential to create evening permit bays and the associated issues.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- NOTED** the updates on Inverness traffic management issues; and
- AGREED**, in relation to Decriminalised Parking Enforcement, that a breakdown of the streets with the highest levels of offences be circulated to Members of the Committee.

18. Castle Wynd, Eastgate and Bridge Street - Proposed Alterations to Taxi Ranks

Caigeann a' Chaisteil, Am Bothar an Ear agus Sràid na Drochaid – Atharrachaidhean gam Moladh a thaobh Raointean Tagsaidh

There had been circulated Joint Report No CIA//18 dated 9 November 2018 by the Inverness City Area Manager and the Director of Community Services.

During discussion, further information was sought, and provided, on the issues associated with utilising the loading bay outside the Caledonian Bar for additional taxi rank allocation. Reference having been made to feedback from taxi drivers and the need to minimise dangerous U-turns on Bridge Street, it was proposed that the loading bay be made available after 9.30 pm as a taxi rank for two vehicles. It was recognised that this would require an amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order, which would be subject to public consultation.

As an alternative, it was suggested that consideration be given to utilising the bus bays on Union Street. However, it was explained that bus services ran up to midnight at those stops and the taxi trade, with whom there had been lengthy discussions, did not see any advantage in the bays being made available after midnight. A further suggestion, Station Lane, was under discussion in relation to the Railway Station development.

Other Members commented that the fact that the loading bay outside the Caledonian Bar was valued by emergency services was more important than providing two taxi ranks that the taxi trade was not pushing for. It was proposed that the Committee note the position as recommended and that the matter be revisited in the future, when information could be provided on what was working well, what could be done better, and the street pastors' views on what the problem areas were. The Inverness City Area Manager added that a complete picture could be provided once the "Accessing Inverness" consultation had concluded.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the status of the provision of a night time Taxi rank in Eastgate, Inverness.

19. Inverness Local Holidays 2019/20
Saor-làithean Ionadail Inbhir Nis 2019/20

The Committee **AGREED** the following dates as Local Holidays for the City of Inverness for years 2019 and 2020:-

2019

Tuesday 1 January (New Year's Day)
Wednesday 2 January
Monday 4 February
Monday 4 March
Monday 22 April (Easter Monday)
Monday 6 May (May Day)
Monday 1 July
Monday 7 October
Monday 4 November
Wednesday 25 December (Christmas Day)
Thursday 26 December (Boxing Day)

2020

Wednesday 1 January (New Year's Day)
Thursday 2 January
Monday 3 February
Monday 2 March
Monday 13 April (Easter Monday)
Monday 4 May (May Day)
Monday 6 July
Monday 5 October
Monday 2 November
Friday 25 December (Christmas Day)
Monday 28 December (Boxing Day Holiday)

20. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the Minutes of the City of Inverness Area Committee held on 30 August 2018;
- ii. **NOTED** the Minutes of the Victorian Market Stakeholder Group held on 7 August 2018;
- iii. **NOTED** the Minutes of the Victorian Market Stakeholder Group held on 11 September 2018;
- iv. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Inverness City Arts Working Group held on 2 November 2018;
- v. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee held on 29 October 2018; and
- vi. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group held on 10 September 2018.

In relation to the Minutes of the City of Inverness Area Committee on 30 August 2018 and the Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group on 10 September 2018, on the point being raised, it was confirmed that the previously agreed breakdown of expenditure on events and festivals in 2017/18 would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

In relation to the Victorian Market Stakeholder Group Minutes, it was **AGREED** that a list of events in the Victorian Market prior to Christmas be circulated to Members of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 3.35 pm.