

City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Events and Festivals Working Group** held in the 2nd Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Monday 4 March 2019 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Highland Council:

Mr G Ross
Mr I Brown
Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr D Macpherson
Mr C Smith

Other Representatives:

Ms J Cuddy, Manager, Eastgate Shopping Centre
Mr M Smith, Manager, Inverness BID
Ms A Wilson, Inverness Hotels
Mrs J Murray, Victorian Market Manager

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr G Reynolds, Inverness Events Manager
Mrs A MacArthur, Administrative Assistant

Also Present (for Agenda Items 1-4)

Mr L Kidger, LCC Live

Mr G Ross in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been intimated on behalf of Mr M Whyte – UHI.

2. Exclusion of the Public

Members **RESOLVED** that, under Section 50(A) 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 Paragraph 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. LCC Live Presentation

Mr Les Kidger of LCC Live gave a briefing on the European Pipe Band Championships and the 2019 Live in the City concerts.

2018 had been the busiest year in Inverness with 30,000 tickets sold for events. For 2019 it was hoped sales could reach 50,000. Noel Gallacher was coming in June, with Skippinish and Keiser Chiefs also coming later in the year.

The European Pipe Band Championships would be held in Bught Park and he would be working closely with Gerry during the organisation of the event.

While LCC was focused on profit as it was a private company, LCC believed in joint initiatives and were committed to working in partnership with Gerry and his team in order to benefit both LCC and the Council.

Members welcomed Mr Kidger and congratulated LCC on the bands they had brought to Inverness. LCC brought a lot of expertise and was helping to make Inverness a very vibrant city.

A discussion then followed on the infrastructure at Bught Park and the Northern Meeting Park.

The working group thanked Mr Kidger for his attendance and looked forward to working with and seeing him on a regular basis.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

There had been circulated Minutes from the previous Meeting held on 3 December 2018 which were **NOTED**.

6. 2018-2020 Programme Update

The 2018 Red Hot Highland Fling had been a success and Mr Reynolds thanked the good natured crowd for the part they had played. There had been no lost children, no arrests, no ejections and no first aid issues. Scott Taylor and his team had worked hard behind the scenes. There had been good publicity for the city before, during and after the event; and the 10,700 present meant that Inverness had overtaken Edinburgh's 10,000 capacity show.

The Working Group congratulated Mr Reynolds and his team on a very successful and well run event that had received national press coverage.

Thereafter, the Working Group **NOTED** the update on the 2018/20 programme.

7. Financial Monitoring

There had been circulated Report No E&F 01/19 by the Inverness City Area Manager dated 22 February 2019.

Thereafter, the Working Group **NOTED** the update.

8. Marketing and Merchandising Sub-Group

The Sub-Group were congratulated on completing their first contract. Mrs Murray advised it had been a tight timescale, however they had managed to set up the web page, choose products, logo design and prices for products. The merchandise had embodied the Red Hot Highland Fling. Merchandise had been pushed on social media and even though there had not been a huge window for sales, word had gotten out.

Sales had been through an arrangement with an independent shop in the market and at the event, with sales mostly to tourists. Feedback was good with people liking the product and the quality of the product. Going forward products would be pushed on the website.

The Sub-Group was eager to have products ready in time for Halloween, the Fireworks, Winter Wonderland and the Highland Games. Marketing and merchandising would now be a standard item on the agenda going forward and it was hoped that product information could be made available as soon as possible for the Highland Games.

Members agreed that investment was required for a card reader which would have helped increase sales on the night.

The Working Group:

- i. **NOTED** the update; and
- ii. **AGREED** that a card reader be purchased to achieve greater sales.

9. Riverlights Update

Mr Reynolds advised the Working Group that following a review of the proposed Riverlights event and the 2019-2020 Action Plan; it was proposed that Riverlights should be rescheduled.

The Working Group **AGREED** that the Riverlights Project be postponed and reviewed for inclusion in the planned 2022 Bicentenary celebrations to mark the opening of the Caledonian Canal

10. 2019-2020 Action Plan and Report on the CIAC

The City of Inverness Committee had requested a continuation of the Working Group's focus on finance, and Mr Reynolds presented details of a proposal he had developed in partnership with the City of Inverness Highland Games Committee for the launch of a fundraising draw to be called Thrifty 50.

In addition to organising the Inverness Highland Games, the Games Committee were committed to supporting the city's events programme and had indicated that if requested by the Working Group they were agreeable to leading on the organisation of a series of draws at the city's large events.

It was noted that to set up the draw required an application to be made to the Highland Licencing Board and once that process had been completed that permission be sought from the Inverness City Committee to launch Thrifty 50 in the summer.

Mr Reynolds then updated members on the plans for the Inverness Highland Games and Gala Weekend's Sunday which would include Proud Ness, a sponsored walk in aid of Mikeysline, a dog show called Ruff Ness and a new exhibition called Well Ness.

The Working Group **AGREED** to:

- i. the development of a Thrifty 50 draw with a ticket price of £1;
- ii. the expanded programme for Sunday 21 July.

11. Infirmary Bridge Closures

The Working Group discussed a request that had been received from Community Services, in the interests of safety, for closure of the Infirmary Bridge when public events were being held.

The Working Group **NOTED** the requested closures of the bridge during public events held at Bught Park and the Northern Meeting Park.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group **NOTED** that the next meeting would be held on 3 June 2019 at 10.00 am in the 2nd Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness.

The meeting closed at 12.25 pm.