

**The City of Inverness Area Committee
Inverness City Arts Working Group**

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Inverness City Arts Working Group** held in First Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Monday 24 February 2020 at 10.00a.m.

Present:

Mrs H Carmichael
Mr I Brown
Mrs I Mackenzie

Non Member in Attendance:-

Mr R MacWilliam

In Attendance:

Mrs A Clark, Acting Head of Policy
Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr J Kelman, Principal Project Manager
Ms J Duggan, Project Manager
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant

Also in attendance:

Ms C Shankland, Exhibitions Officer, High Life Highland

Mrs I MacKenzie in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr G Ross.

2. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Exclusion of the Public

The 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 in respect of any issues relating to the circumstances of third parties on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 Part 1 of schedule 7A of the Act.

4. Actions from Previous Minutes

There had been circulated and **NOTED** the minutes of the Working Group held on 6 November, 2019.

Arising from the Minutes, the City Area Manager advised that:-

- In order to deliver on the City of Inverness Area Committee's request

that the My Ness project had to be extended to enable access arrangements for wheelchair users, it was confirmed that funding towards this additional cost had now been achieved which was a great team effort. Creative Scotland had also now provided targeted funding to support the access works requested by the City Committee. Therefore the project was now ready to progress, subject to the Working Group's approval.

- It was confirmed that work on the Rest Space feature was progressing.

The Working Group **NOTED** the update.

5. River Connections Public Art Project Programme

There had been circulated Report No ICArts 01/20 by the Acting Head of Policy dated 19 February 2020. At this meeting of the ICArts Working Group Members were updated on the progress made on the Project Programme since the last Working Group meeting as follows:-

It was highlighted that the project funding was now in place for the My Ness project to be able to proceed and the Working Group were asked to agree to proceed with instructing the contractor to commence work on the construction phase of the My Ness Project. Members were updated on a number of issues relating to the management and governance of the contract for this project.

Details were provided in relation to site preparation for the My Ness project. It was proposed to have a site inspection with all the relevant parties on a date yet to be determined and the Working Group supported this.

An update was provided in relation to the next steps that would be taken should the Working Group approve proceeding with the My Ness project and negotiations that had been undertaken with the preferred contractor. In particular, it was highlighted that given the issues and concerns with the project, the Working Group had gone beyond what was legally required in terms of project management.

The Fisherman's Hut project was a separate independent project, which had been supported separately by the Inverness Common Good Fund and the Town Centre Fund. Appropriate steps were being taken to ensure there were synergies between this project and the My Ness Project. The Ness Angling Club were very content with the liaison and collaboration with the Council on their Fisherman's Hut project.

Further, another matter to be progressed was the elements of the Children's water feature in relation to the education programme following the decision to cancel the Children's Water Feature.

In relation to the Rest Spaces project the planning issues had been approved and would form part of a planning condition for the art element of West Link phase 2 project. The artwork installation would be undertaken as part of the West Link phase 2 project.

It was explained that the funding gap for the My Ness project had been closed as Creative Scotland had confirmed the award of targeted funding grant of

£27k in order to support the improved access requirements and to enable its completion.

It was queried how this additional funding was justified given the decision of the City of Inverness Area Committee in August, 2019 that there should be no more public funds spent on this project. It was explained that the context of the decisions taken at that meeting focussed on the provision of public art and the Committee's intention was that there would be no more public funds. Then after further debate, City Committee Members wished to go above the legal minimum requirements for the provision of access and so extend access to the public art piece. It was therefore agreed to investigate how this could be achieved and funded. The Working Group and City of Inverness Area Committee were updated with this information at their November, 2019 meetings and agreed to the consent of the further investigation regarding the funding of that provision. A solution to fund the additional access to the public art work (My Ness) had now been found and was now recommended to the Working Group for approval.

Further, a view was expressed that the decision of the City of Inverness Area Committee was that there should be no more Inverness Common Good Fund money spent on the project. It was confirmed that there was no intention to spend additional Common Good funding on it.

Continuing, if the funding from Creative Scotland was not accepted then the project would end. Therefore, as reported to the City of Inverness Area Committee in August, if the programme was terminated this would result in an additional cost to the Council of a minimum £125k. If it was only the My Ness project that was terminated there would be an additional cost to the Council of £190k. These additional costs related to payments the Council had already made and would not be able to reclaim from its Partners. In addition, Highlands and Islands Enterprise had already indicated that they would reclaim £10k they had already committed to the programme if it was terminated and there would also be an Artist termination fee.

Therefore, Members having noted that the scrutiny and governance of the arrangements for all the projects within the programme had been undertaken properly through this Working Group and the City of Inverness Area Committee, were supportive of the recommendations. It was advised that a briefing on the decision taken would be sent to all City of Inverness Area Committee Members.

The Working Group also thanked Creative Scotland for their incredible support for the programme.

Thereafter, the Working Group:-

- i. **AGREED** to proceed with instructing the construction contractor to commence work on the construction phase of the My Ness Project, noting that all required funding was in place, along with the contingency budget required. A Site inspection for all relevant parties, with an invitation to Inverness City Committee Members to attend, would be held on a date to be confirmed.
- ii. **NOTED** the award of Town Centre funding towards the replacement of

- the Fisherman's Hut and the progress towards this.
- iii. **NOTED** the update regarding the relocation of the Rest Space and that following completion of all agreed conditions and subject to programme adjustments, installation will commence in April as part of the West Link Phase 2 project;
 - iv. **NOTED** the delay in progressing with some elements of the education project following the decision to cancel the Children's Water feature; and
 - v. **NOTED** that a written briefing would be submitted to the City Committee Members on the decisions taken at this meeting.

6. Financial Monitoring

There had been circulated Report No ICArts 02/20 by the Inverness City Area Manager dated 3 February 2020. The report set out the revenue monitoring position for the period to 31 January 2020 and showed the actual expenditure to date.

The Committee **NOTED** the content of the report and the addition of £27k in targeted grant funding for My Ness from Creative Scotland.

7. Press relations and forthcoming PR opportunities and risks

The City Area Manager advised that a written update on the River Connections Public Art Project Programme would be provided to all Members of the City of Inverness Area Committee and that there would also be a site inspection for the My Ness Project.

A Press Release would be issued regarding the decisions taken at this meeting on the Project Programme. Members of the City of Inverness Area Committee and the public would be kept up to date throughout the various stages of the project.

The Committee **NOTED** the Public relations actions to be undertaken in relation to the River Connections Public Art Project Programme.

8. Date of next Meeting

The Committee **NOTED** that the date of the next meeting would be Wednesday, 13 May, 2020.

The meeting ended at 11.25 a.m.