

**The Highland Council
City of Inverness Area Committee**

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held Remotely on Thursday 9 July, 2020 at 9.30 a.m.

Present:

Mr B Boyd
Mrs C Caddick
Miss J Campbell
Mrs H Carmichael

Mr A Graham
Mr A Jarvie
Miss E Roddick
Mr G Ross

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, City Manager's Office
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Chief Executive's Service

Mr G Ross in the Chair

Business

1. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

Item 4 – Mrs H Carmichael (Non Financial)

3. Exclusion of Public

The Sub-Committee **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 item on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

4. Request for Financial Assistance

Declaration of Interest: –

Mrs H Carmichael, declared a non-financial interest as a Board Member of the Inverness Business Improvement District but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that the interest did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion of the item.

There had been circulated Report No GSC/05/20 dated 3 July 2020 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

Members scrutinised the report which showed:- the balance of funds available for allocation from the 2020/21 budget; funds committed for grants and for Conference support; funds committed to Partnerships; funds committed from the City Promotions budget and an application received for financial assistance from the Inverness Common Good Fund.

It was advised that no money had been spent this financial year due to the Covid-19 emergency. There were a number of pending applications which would be brought before the Sub-Committee in due course.

A strategic review of spend for 2020 would be required given the Covid-19 emergency. Spend would be hugely different this year compared to previous years, given the cancellation of many events and festivals.

In considering the application, Members noted that the Common Good Fund would not normally pay wages, but given that these were exceptional times and the need to support businesses in the City of Inverness in the recovery from Covid, it was viewed appropriate to support the application for City Ambassadors. The Ambassadors would provide reassurance to businesses and make the public feel safe so that they had confidence to return to the High Street.

Following consideration, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** the following application for financial assistance from the Inverness Common Good Fund.

Inverness BID Ltd (£6,422.00) **APPROVED £6,422.00**
"Here to Help" – City Ambassadors

5. Highland News & Media Ltd – Inverness Bounceback Campaign

There had been circulated a proposal from Highland News & Media Ltd regarding their Inverness Bounceback Campaign. The Sub Committee was invited to consider the proposal which would be drawn from the City Promotions budget.

It was advised that there were a number of different ways being considered to improve the physical safety of people in the City Centre and the publicity from this campaign would not only be reassuring for the public, but also make it clear that there was partnership working on the recovery of the City of Inverness. A report on the effectiveness of this campaign would be brought back to the Sub-Committee with potential next steps. The publicity campaign would be displayed in print and digital platforms which would cover all age groups in society.

Following consideration, the Sub Committee **APPROVED** the proposal from Highland News & Media Ltd at a cost of £3,950.

6. Date of Next Meeting

AGENDA ITEM 14vi

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 10 August, 2020 at 9.30 am.

The meeting ended at 10.15 a.m.

**The Highland Council
City of Inverness Area Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held REMOTELY via Microsoft Teams on Monday 10 August 2020 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Mrs H Carmichael
Mr A Graham
Mrs E McAllister

Ms E Roddick
Mr G Ross

Officials in Attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, City Manager's Office
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Chief Executive's Service

Mr G Ross in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr B Boyd, Mrs C Caddick and Miss J Campbell.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

Item 5, Booklet A & B – Mrs E McAllister – (Non-Financial)
Item 5, Booklet B – Mr G Ross – (Financial)
Item 5, Booklet C – Mr G Ross – (Non Financial)
Item 5, Booklet D – Mr A Graham (Financial)

3. Exclusion of the Public

The Sub-Committee **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 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.

4. Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee Annual Report

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/01/20 dated 3 August 2020 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

It was highlighted that the report set out the Sub Committee's powers and what the Sub Committee had decided to do with the allocated budget in the last financial year. In particular, due to the impact of Covid-19 there was a considerable underspend on the budget relating to hospitality as there were a number of projects that had been cancelled or postponed. Other than this, the report signified a very good spread of

expenditure across a variety of projects. It was confirmed that any underspend would be returned to the ICGF for future allocation.

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to the report being presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 27 August 2020.

5. Requests for Financial Assistance 2020/21

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/02/20 dated 24 July 2020 by the Inverness City Area Manager. There had also been circulated separately a copy of the applications and any supporting documentation as Booklets A, B, C and D.

In relation to the current situation with Covid-19, it was suggested that where there was an application for an event which may or may not be able to be delivered because of Covid-19, if the Sub Committee wished to approve the application, it should be recorded that while the Sub Committee were minded to approve the application, noting the current Covid-19 crises, the Sub Committee do not feel it appropriate to give approval to the application until such time as the Covid-19 guidelines permit the event to take place. In the event of this, powers be delegated to the Inverness City Area Manager in consultation with the Sub Committee to agree the application. This approach was supported by the Committee.

Booklet A – applications under £5,000

The Sub-Committee determined applications for funding as follows:-

Declaration of Interest – Mrs E McAllister declared a non-financial interest in the following application as a family member was a resident in a care home but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, concluded that the interest did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion of the application.

Music in Hospitals and Care (£3,600 sought)

Reaching Out: Musical Live Broadcasts in care homes in Inverness **APPROVED £3,600 in principle, subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing this project to go ahead.**

The application was supported as the provision of live music would make a big difference and provide enjoyment to many residents in care homes. The Group should also be encouraged to look at other funding streams in future years. It was advised that repeat applications were reduced by 20% in grant each year, in order that applicants did not become too reliant on the Common Good Fund.

Inverness Chamber Music Society (£4,784 sought)

2020/21 Series of Chamber Music Concerts in the Town House

APPROVED £4,784 in principle, subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing concerts to proceed.

The Sub Committee were in support of the application, but determined that if the event was not able to proceed this financial year due to Covid-19 restrictions, then a new application would be required in the next financial year.

Bellfield Park Tennis Club (£3,375 sought) **APPROVED £3,375**
Replacement of Nets and Posts on 8 tennis courts

The number of people, particularly young people, taking part in tennis continued to increase and therefore the application was worthy of support.

Inverness Crown Action with the Unemployed (£1,500 sought) **REFUSED**
Launchpad

The Sub Committee were of the view that while it was a good project, it would not be appropriate for the Common Good Fund to award funds where the use of that funding was discretionary.

Booklet B – applications £5,001 - £10,000

New Start Highland (£9,600 sought) **APPROVED £7,200**
Make a Home Inverness

The Sub Committee were supportive of the project considering that more people would be needing help with accommodation given the Covid-19 crises.

Chamber Music Tours Scotland (£6,640 sought)
Inverness Piano Recitals 2020/21 **APPROVED £3,320 in principle subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing the Recitals to proceed.**

The Sub Committee supported the application.

Inverness Angling Club (£9,500 sought) **APPROVED £9,500**
Inverness Town Fishings

This was a good project and involved a significant amount of preservation work to ensure the river ness was clean.

Keep Scotland Beautiful (£9,500 sought) **APPROVED £7,600**
Canal College

This project worked with unemployed people to improve their opportunities for employment and the Sub Committee supported the application.

Apex Scotland (£7,742 sought) **APPROVED £7,742**
Apex Highland Challenge Team

This was a successful project that helped offenders rehabilitate and the amount sought was supported, but that it be funded from the Other Properties budget.

High Life Highland (Inverness Leisure) (£9,505 sought) **APPROVED £4,750**
Competition Cage upgrade at Queens Park Athletics Track

The project was supported but that as with any activity funded by the Common Good that was carried out by the Council or its agents, an assurance would be

sought that this activity would not otherwise be funded by the Council or its agents and that it was added value to enhance facilities. A reduced award was agreed on the understanding that High Life Highland would fund the additional amount requested.

Declaration of Interest – Mr G Ross, declared a financial interest in the following application as a member of the Kings Golf Club Inverness and took no part in the discussion.

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr A Graham was unanimously appointed as Interim Chair for the following application

The Kings Golf Club Inverness (£9,999 sought) **APPROVED £9,999**
Golf Practice Area Shelter

The project was supported by the Committee which would bring benefits to the people of Inverness.

Inverness High School (£9,364 sought)
S1 Outdoor Transition Project 2020 **APPROVED £7,491 in principle, subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing this project to proceed.**

The Committee were supportive of the project.

Declaration of Interest – Mrs E McAllister declared a Non Financial interest in the following application, as a member of the Partnership for Wellbeing Group and took no part in the discussion.

Partnerships for Wellbeing (£9,900 sought) **APPROVED £9,900**
P4W Transport

The Sub Committee supported the application.

Inverness Festivals Association (£9,800 sought)
Inverness Music Festival 2021 **APPROVED £7,840 in principle, subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing the event to proceed.**

This application was supported.

Booklet C – applications over £10,000

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to make the following recommendations to the City of Inverness Area Committee in respect of the following applications for funding of over £10,000 as follows:-

Declaration of Interest - Mr G Ross declared a non-financial interest in the following application as he had previously written a letter of support for this organisation but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that the interest did not preclude him from taking part in the discussion of the application.

Inshes Community Association (£120,000 sought) **DEFERRED**
Inshes Scooter and Wheeled Sports Park

More detail of the scale of the demand for this facility was requested. Also, there was no evidence of a users group set up to raise money. There were also similar facilities at Raigmore and the Bught Park and the demand for an additional facility was queried. Therefore, the Sub Committee were of the view that there was not enough detail in the application that this facility would make a significant difference to the City of Inverness as the BMX facility at the Bught Park had done.

The Sub Committee **AGREED to defer** the application to the next meeting for more information on local need and how this facility would make a significant difference to Inverness as other similar facilities in Inverness had done.

Wasps Trust (£65,000 sought) **APPROVED £65,000**
Inverness Creative Academy – Phase 2

This was a major project and had been very successful and funding would enable the project to be completed. Therefore, the Sub Committee were supportive of the application.

Booklet D – Conference Support

Declaration of Interest – Mr A Graham declared a financial interest in the following item as his employer, Bord na Gaidhlig, was a funder of the Royal National MOD and he took no part in the discussion.

LOC MNR 2020 (£9,750 sought) **APPROVED £9,750**
Royal National Mod 2020 Inverness

The Sub Committee were supportive of the application.

MonsterFest Rocks Limited (£9,000 sought)
Monsterfest 2020 APPROVED in principle £9,000 but noted that under Covid-19 guidelines this event could not take place at present

It was highlighted that the Tourism Co-ordinator had supported this application as it was a new event and fits well with extending the season beyond the summer months, provided a boost to the end of the season, as well as establishing an event for future years.

The Sub Committee were supportive of the application but noted that under Covid-19 guidelines the event could not go ahead at present.

6. Police Scotland

The Sub Committee was asked to consider the application submitted by Police Scotland towards Operation Respect II – Supporting Vulnerable Communities by the purchase of equipment in order that cycle patrols can be carried out. A contribution of £1,500 was requested and if approved would be drawn from the City Promotions Budget.

It was explained that , the application was for equipment that the Police would not otherwise be able to obtain and would enhance the profile of the Police in the City and support the aim of city vibrancy and recovery from Covid-19. The funding would enhance safety and access to the City Centre and reassure the public.

The Sub Committee were very supportive of the application and **APPROVED** an award of £1,500.

7. Inverness Rotary Club

The Sub Committee was asked to consider the application submitted by the Inverness City Area Manager on behalf of Inverness Rotary Club towards a Rotary Centenary Bed at the Raigmore Interchange Roundabout in 2021 at a cost of £16,900.

It was highlighted that the application was also connected with the current Covid-19 crises and the Rotary Club had played a major role in this with the City focusing on volunteering and supporting community resilience. The Centenary Bed would send out a strong statement in a public place.

There may be some impact on the application in respect of pricing from High Life Highland arising from Covid-19, and if so the Sub Committee would be consulted.

The Sub Committee **APPROVED** the application for £16,900. It was also **AGREED** that the Sub Committee would be consulted on any price increase as a consequence of Covid-19.

8. Evaluations Forms

There had been circulated and **NOTED** evaluation forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects. The Committee welcomed the evaluation forms which would also be used for audit purposes.

9. Visit Inverness Loch Ness

The Sub Committee **Homologated** the decision to award £10,000 from the Partnership Working Budget to Visit Inverness Loch Ness towards supporting businesses in Inverness in the immediate post Covid-19 recovery period.

10. Lotland Street Yard

The Sub Committee **Homologated** the decision to approve payment of the extra costs of £2,378 incurred in the clearance of the Lotland Street Yard, noting the original award was £9,897.

11. Tree Pruning in Millburn Road

The Sub Committee **Homologated** the decision to award £888 from the Other Properties Budget towards the cutting back of trees in Millburn Road.

12. Civic Hospitality Requests

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/03/20 dated 3 August, 2020 by the Inverness City Area Manager which listed the applications received for Civic Hospitality from the Inverness Common Good Fund.

In this connection there had been circulated separately a copy of the applications and any supporting documentation as Booklet E.

In relation to the current situation with Covid-19, it was suggested that where there was an application for civic hospitality which may or may not be able to be delivered because of Covid-19, if the Sub Committee wished to approve the application, it should be recorded that while the Sub Committee were minded to approve the application, noting the current Covid-19 crises, the Sub Committee do not feel it appropriate to give approval until such time as the Covid-19 guidelines permit the event to take place. In the event of this, powers be delegated to the Inverness City Area Manager in consultation with the Sub Committee to agree the application. This approach was supported by the Committee.

The Sub-Committee determined the applications listed in Appendix 2 to the report and detailed in Booklet E as follows:

Highland Golf Links

Highland Golf Links Pro AM 2020 Civic Buffet (£3,489.13 sought)

This was a prestigious golf event which brought visitors to the City and the Sub Committee **APPROVED** £3,489.13 in principle, subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing the event to proceed.

Inverness Business Improvement District (£1,200 sought)

Inverness City Centre Business Awards 2020

The Sub Committee **APPROVED** £1,200 in principle, subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing the event to go ahead.

SNBTS Raigmore Hospital Inverness (£2,758.20 sought)

Inverness Donor Awards Ceremony 2020 Civic Buffet

The Sub Committee **APPROVED** £2,758.20 in principle, subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing the event to proceed.

Rotary Club of Inverness (£2,990.93)

Centennial Celebration Civic Buffet

The Sub Committee **APPROVED** £2,990.93 in principle, subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing the event to proceed.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday, 2 November, 2020 at 9.30 a.m.

14. Urgent Item – Inverness Courier Bounceback Campaign

The Chairman advised that this urgent item of business would be taken at this meeting given the need to consider the proposal timeously if the Sub Committee wished to continue with a further period of advertising on the Inverness Courier Bounceback Campaign.

The Inverness City Area Manager gave a presentation on the Inverness Bounceback Campaign. Reference was made to the decision at the last meeting to approve a proposal from Highland News & Media Ltd for a publicity campaign. This campaign had delivered in what the Sub Committee had expected it to do.

There was now a new proposal from Highland News & Media Ltd for a Bounceback Campaign for two months at a cost of £9,600 across print and digital platforms. The aim of the campaign was to promote a safe atmosphere for people to visit the City Centre and it was welcomed that there was an increased number of people visiting the City Centre. The campaign would champion the City Centre and the Highlands. Details of the campaign were provided at the meeting, which would run up until the important Christmas shopping period. The Sub Committee was invited to consider the proposal.

In discussion, reference was made to some members of the public still feeling uncertain about going back to the City Centre and the Bounceback campaign would hopefully ease their anxiety about returning to shops etc. While satisfied with the last campaign, a view was expressed that some further discount should be made by the company to make it would attractive to take up their offer, given that they would not have the same set up costs for the next campaign.

However, a view was expressed that there was a need for more justification of the need for further publicity prior to consideration of the proposal. In particular, some of the press coverage was only for businesses in the Business Improvement District and more justification for the funding for the last campaign was sought, i.e. how successful it had been.

It was advised that the campaign was being broadened out to include other businesses, but a request for information on how successful the previous campaign was would be made and whether there were additional incentives on offer to take up the proposal. It was also noted that the proposal included a discount of 75% on normal costs.

Thereafter, Mr A Graham, seconded by Mrs H Carmichael, **Moved** approval of the proposal from Highland News & Media Ltd for a further 2 months Bounceback Campaign, subject to Officers negotiating a further discount in cost. Further, prior to considering any future proposal a report be submitted to the Sub Committee with

what had been achieved in previous Bounceback campaigns and what the benefits of continuation would be.

As an **Amendment**, Ms E Roddick, moved that the proposal from Highland News & Media Ltd be refused on the basis there was not enough justification of the benefits of a further campaign. However, there was no seconder and therefore the Amendment failed.

Decision

*The Sub Committee **AGREED** the proposal from Highland News & Media Ltd for a further 2 months Bounceback Campaign at a cost of £9,600, subject to Officers negotiating a further discount in cost. Further, prior to considering any future proposal a report be submitted to the Sub Committee with what had been achieved in previous Bounceback campaigns and what the benefits of continuation would be.*

The meeting ended at 11.20 a.m.