

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

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held REMOTELY on Monday 2 November, 2020 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Mr I Brown

Mrs C Caddick

Mrs H Carmichael

Miss J Campbell

Mrs E McAllister

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 and Mr A Graham.

2. Declarations of Interest

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

Item 4, Booklet C – Mr G Ross – (Non-Financial)

Item 4, Booklet A & Item 5 – Miss J Campbell – (Non Financial)

Item 4, Booklet C – Mrs C Caddick – (Non Financial)

Item 4, Booklet B & Item 5 – Mrs E McAllister (Non Financial)

Item 4, Booklet D – Mrs H Carmichael (Non 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. Requests for Financial Assistance 2020/21

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/04/20 dated 22 October, 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.

Booklet A – applications under £5,000

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

Declaration of Interest – Miss J Campbell declared a non-financial interest in the following application as a former Board Member of the Oxygen Works 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.

MS Therapy Centre T/A The Oxygen Works (£4,350 sought)
Waiving of rent and purchase of Covid secure equipment **APPROVED £4,350**

The application was supported noting the intention for the Therapy Centre to move to premises within the University of the Highlands and Islands campus, but because of Covid-19 the move had been delayed.

University of the Highlands and Islands (£5,000 sought)
2021 Inverness Science Festival **APPROVED £5,000 in principle subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing this project to go ahead.**

The Sub Committee were in support of the application as it would add value to the educational provision in Schools.

The ARCHIE Foundation (£5,000 sought)
Family Connections

APPROVED £5,000 subject to Officers checking with Wipro as to whether they would make a voluntary contribution to the application.

The Sub Committee noted the great work the Foundation did with young people and visits to hospitals, but while supportive there was a view that the Foundation should also be looking at other funding sources in future. The Sub Committee approved the application for £5,000 on this occasion, subject to Officers checking with Wipro if they would make a voluntary contribution, noting that this could reduce the sum awarded so long as without detriment to the project.

Wee Adventure (£2,000 sought) **APPROVED £2,000**
Let’s go on a Wheel Adventure

The Sub Committee were supportive of the application and it was noted the Group had been asked to contact Sustrans for support. There were many small charitable groups and it was suggested there should be more collaboration between smaller groups in order for them to be more effective. Officers would address this issue with the Third Sector Interface as it was felt smaller groups did not have the capacity to link up and needed the help to do so.

Clarity Walk CIC (£3,312 sought) **APPROVED £1,656**
Clarity walk recovery

The Sub Committee were of the view that this was a good initiative and there were many similar initiatives being held. The Sub Committee however were not supportive of funding the full amount of this initiative and instead agreed to approve 50% funding of the amount sought with the applicant being advised that match funding would be required for the event to go ahead.

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

Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland (£8,500 sought) **REFUSED**
Support for bereaved children and adults in Inverness

The Sub Committee were not supportive of the application as it was from a national organisation with significant resources and while it was a good cause there was not enough justification on the benefits of the application to the City of Inverness.

Equilibrium Caledonia CIC (£9,999 sought) **REFUSED**
Happy Healthy Diary

The Sub Committee were not supportive of the application as it was felt that there was significant duplication with the service provided to young people by Schools.

Highland Group Riding for the Disabled Association (£9,000 sought)
Outdoor Arena Surface for RDA Centre **APPROVED £9,000**

The Sub Committee were supportive of the application as the funding would go towards investing in infrastructure and local people would directly benefit from this.

Birchwood Highland (£10,000 sought) **REFUSED**
Service Users People Carrier

The Sub Committee were not supportive of the application as there were other sources of funding that could award the group the full purchase cost for the vehicle. It was also not known if the vehicle would give a specific benefit to the local community or whether other forms of transport such as taxis could be used and a comparison of costs for this. There may also be other charitable groups that could share transport. However Members recognised the excellent work done by the organisation and expressed interest in welcoming an application for new/additional activities that Birchwood Highland were considering.

Highland Bears (£8,230 sought) **DEFERRED**
Outdoor Basketball – Winter and Beyond

The Sub Committee deferred a decision on this application pending further information being sought on the viability of the project in terms of permissions to install floodlighting etc and what community engagement will take place.

Declaration of Interest - Mrs E McAllister declared a non financial interest on the following item, as a member of Highland Blindcraft and took no part in the discussion.

Highland Blindcraft (£9,430) **APPROVED £9,430**
Modernisation of Lift

The Sub-Committee were supportive of the application as the money would go towards facilitating an important project.

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.

Mrs C Caddick declared a non financial interest in the following application as a Highland Council member of the Inshes Park Association and took no part in the decision on this.

Inshes Community Association (£120,000 sought) **APPROVED £30,000**
Inshes Scooter and Wheeled Sports Park

The Sub Committee were supportive of the application, and approved recommending £30,000 towards it as it would provide a good facility for this part of the City. It was noted that there were similar facilities in other parts of the City. It was also suggested that the Community Payback team may be able to assist with parts of the project.

Crown Church Inverness (£30,000 sought) **APPROVED £30,000**
Refurbishment and upgrading of upper church hall

The Sub Committee felt this was a good project which would provide a good facility for that part of the City and provide benefit for local people.

Blythswood Care (£20,000 sought)
Highland Foodbank – Inverness 2021 **APPROVED £20,000**
from the ICGF Winter Payments Scheme

At the last City of Inverness Area Committee the amount of funding to the Winter Payments Scheme was increased and it was suggested that if minded to approve this application, it be funded from the Winter Payments Scheme.

The Sub Committee fully supported the application and that it be funded from the ICGF Winter Payments Scheme budget .

High Life Highland (£10,300 sought) **REFUSED**
Ways to Wellbeing

The Sub Committee were of the view that HLH had significant resources in order to fund this project and was a service that they should be carrying out as part of

their youth work programme. There was not enough detail in the application of added value to the City. Therefore the application was refused.

Declaration of Interest – Mrs H Carmichael declared a non financial interest in the following application as a Board Member of Visit Inverness Loch Ness and took no part in the discussion.

Booklet D – Conference Support

Visit Inverness Loch Ness (£4,400 sought)

TOURS Annual Conference 2021 **APPROVED £4,400 in principle subject to Covid-19 guidelines allowing this event to go ahead.**

The Sub Committee were supportive of the application.

5. Merkinch Local Nature Reserve Boardwalk

Declaration of Interest -

Miss J Campbell and Mrs E McAllister declared a non-financial interest in this application as Highland Council members of the Merkinch Partnership but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interest did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion of the application.

The Sub-Committee were asked to consider the application form Claire Bell, Project Officer, Property and Housing towards the replacement of the Merkinch Local Nature Reserve Boardwalk. Funding of £45,000 was requested and if approved 50% would be drawn down from the Other Properties Budget. It was noted that other funding would be required for the project and it was intended to apply for funding, including the Coastal Communities Strategic Fund.

The Sub Committee were very supportive of the application. The nature reserve was unique in the Highlands and had huge potential for the local area, the City of Inverness and its visitors and could link with the aspirations of Scottish Canals. However, given the reduced resources of the Common Good Fund at this time, the Sub Committee were minded to approve 50% of the amount sought with a review of funding towards the project as it progressed.

The Sub Committee **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee funding of £22,500 from the Other Properties Budget towards the Merkinch Local Nature Reserve Boardwalk project.

6. Homologation of Grant Applications Approved in Principle

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the following grant approvals that were approved in principle at the Sub-Committee Meeting on 10th August 2020:

1. Inverness High School - £4,422 towards the S1 Outdoor Transition Project 2020

2. Inverness Festivals Association - £6,195 towards Inverness Music Festival 2021

7.The Ledge

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the project update which explained how the project will continue taking account of Covid implications.

8.Inverness Rotary Club

The Sub-Committee was informed that additional costs of £2,800 to the original quote of £17,900 (The Rotary Club are providing £1,000) maybe incurred in the installation of the Inverness Rotary Club Centenary Bed at the Raigmore Interchange as a result of extra labour costs due to Covid-19 social distancing restrictions. This will only apply if Covid restrictions are still in place in May and October next year and if incurred a detailed costing will be presented to the Sub-Committee.

The Sub Committee **NOTED** the position.

9.Festive Bounceback Campaign

The Sub-Committee was asked to consider an application from the Inverness City Area Manager proposing an extension of the Bounceback campaign in the run up to Christmas.

The Sub Committee **APPROVED** the application for £7,950 for the Festive Bounceback Campaign.

10.Evaluations Forms

There had been circulated and **NOTED** evaluation forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects.

11.Inverness BID

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the following payments:

- £1,894 towards costs incurred in the aborted Floral Displays Project 2020.
- £650 towards costs incurred in aborting the Pigeon Project

Payment was made from the Partnership Working Budget.

In terms of the Pigeon Project it was advised that this had now been reinstated in a Covid-19 safe manner.

In terms of the Floral Displays due to Covid19, it was noted that unused flowers from this year's aborted project had been well utilised by local communities within the City area. Members were reassured that every effort would be made for the City Flowering Project to go ahead in 2021. It was advised that High Life Highland had distributed the plants to community organisations when they were aware they would not be able to maintain them due to Covid-19 restrictions.

12.Civic Hospitality Requests

The Sub Committee **NOTED** that there were no current applications pending. The underspend remained at £123,000 against the Civic Hospitality Budget. It was advised that this underspend was part of an overall underspend the City of Inverness Area Committee were considering.

13.Date of Next Meeting

The Sub Committee **NOTED** that dates for the 2021 meetings were to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 11.45 a.m.