

The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held remotely on Thursday 19 November 2020 at 10.00 am.

Present:

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

Officials in Attendance:

Ms L Denovan, Executive Chief Officer – Resources and Finance
 Mr A Gunn, Executive Chief Officer – Transformation and Economy
 Mr M MacLeod, Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure and Environment
 Ms A Clark, Head of Policy, Communities and Place
 Ms S McKandie, Head of Revenues and Customer Services
 Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager, Communities and Place
 Mr T Stott, Principal Planner, Development Plans Team
 Mr C Baxter, Planner, Development Plans Team
 Mr S Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager
 Mr R Pope, Policy and Programmes Manager
 Mr R MacLeod, Housing Manager (Inverness)
 Mr J Henderson, Housing Investment Officer
 Mr J Taylor, Road Operations Manager - Inverness
 Ms F MacBain, Committee Administrator, Performance and Governance
 Ms M Murray, Committee Administrator, Performance and Governance
 Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Performance and Governance

Also in attendance:

Chief Inspector M MacInnes, Inverness Area Commander, Police Scotland

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 the commencement of the formal business, the Committee **AGREED** to alter the running order of the agenda, to make best use of officer time, as follows: 1-3, 11, 10, Additional Item, 5, 4 (scheduled for 2pm), 6-9, 12, 13.

The Provost & Leader of Inverness and Area made the following announcements:-

- Former **Councillor Major H.H.M (Hamish) Sutherland** had passed away on the 28 October 2020, having been a member of Inverness Town Council, Inverness District Council and Highland Regional Council, serving in the Crown and Raigmore areas of Inverness from 1972 to 1986;
- Former **Councillor Jim Crawford** had passed away on 13 September 2020, having been elected as a Highland Councillor for the Inverness South Ward in 2007, and 2012, and served as an Independent Councillor and then Non-Aligned Councillor;
- **Queen's Birthday Honours 2020**
 - Isobel Shand MacDonald received an MBE (Member of the British Empire) for services to the community in Inverness (Milton of Leys Inverness);
 - Robert McDonald Johnston Shanks received a BEM (British Empire Medal) for services to the Seaforth Highlanders Regimental Association and the community in Culloden, Inverness and Dingwall; and
- **Good News** - on 29 October, Scotland's Towns Partnership announced Inverness Business Improvement District (BID) had been nominated as a Highland High Street Hero, receiving a Highly Commended Award. Inverness BID was one of only 5 of the 40 Scottish BIDs to be recognised in these awards.

Business

1. Apologies for Absence Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Ms E Roddick.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

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

Item 6b – Mr K Gowans (financial) and Mrs I MacKenzie, Mr J Gray, Mr A Jarvie, Mrs C Caddick and Mr A Graham (all non-financial)

Item 10 – Ms J Campbell (non-financial)

3. Appointments to Sub-Committee, Working Groups etc Cur an dreuchd gu Fo-Chomataidh, Buidhnean Obrach is eile

The Committee **AGREED** that Mrs I MacKenzie be appointed to the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee.

4. Notices of Motion Brathan Glusaid

(i) The City of Inverness Area Committee agrees to undertake a 're-imagining of the City of Inverness'

To create a programme of works to include:

- to investigate the possible pedestrianisation of Union Street and Queensgate;
- to undertake a 'deep clean' of all streets within the curtilage of the City, to plant trees and shrubs within the City, to make the City a cleaner, greener, fresher place to live, work and visit; and
- to ensure that all stakeholders are participants in this Programme.

This Programme of Re-Imagining the City of Inverness will encourage more people into the City, support existing City Centre businesses, and create a café/restaurant culture within the square of Union Street, Queensgate and the Victorian Market.

During discussion, the following points were considered:-

- It was requested that a Working Group comprising interested Members, Officers and Stakeholders be set up to take the Motion's concept forward, to gather opinion through public consultation and report back to the City of Inverness Area Committee early in the New Year.
- There was a need to maximise investment received from national Government and look at how the environment of the Town Centre can be made more attractive for people to visit and shop.
- There was evidence to suggest that properly planned pedestrianisation can have a significant positive impact on the visitor experience to a Town Centre as well as helping to tackle climate change and improve air quality.
- It was felt that there should be an assessment of the possibility of pedestrianisation in the City Centre with a view to increasing footfall and additional customers for businesses.
- In the Spaces for People discussions held earlier in the year, the Business Improvement District Group were not in favour of pedestrianisation.
- There would be a cost to deep clean all streets within the curtilage of the City. This cost was not budgeted for and it was queried where this money would come from.
- It was suggested that the various elements of the Motion should be considered at the City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub Group rather than setting up a separate Working Group, as it was felt this would be duplication of current efforts to achieve economic recovery for the City. Over the last few months the Sub Group had already worked on a variety of different projects including looking at improving the Cityscape. The Sub Group had had discussions with the Business Improvement District and the Federation of Small Businesses to try and improve the overall situation within the Town Centre. All Member ideas and suggestions on how to invigorate and revive the City Centre were welcome and would be considered by the Sub Group.
- It was felt that the costs of the measures contained in the Motion would be outweighed by increased business and improvements to public health.
- The issue of access for people who cannot engage in active travel options was raised. It was important not to cut off access for retailers or for people coming into the City Centre to visit/shop who could not walk or cycle
- There were other good Town Centres where lessons could be learned, but they all had their challenges. In particular, it was felt that pedestrianisation was not the panacea as some suggest. Other considerations such as the weather which was not favourable for a café culture proposal had to be taken into account when considering pedestrianisation.

- The Proposers of the Motion were content with assurances given at the meeting that the various elements of the Motion would be discussed at the City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub Group.

Thereafter, the Committee **AGREED** that the various elements of the Notice of Motion be considered at the City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub Group.

(ii) That the CIAC notes with concern the as yet unknown impact of Covid-19 on businesses operating within the Inverness Common Good Fund estate. The committee resolves to consult with those businesses with a view to providing appropriate additional supports in order to promote the mutual long-term interests of both commercial tenants and the ICGF

During discussion, the following points were considered:-

- There had to be support available to ensure the long term viability of businesses within the Common Good Fund Estate which would in turn support the Common Good Fund income stream.
- Reference was made to the Community Wellbeing and Recovery Report at item 10 of this meeting, in which Officers had concluded that “it would not be appropriate to support one section of the business community within Inverness. Supporting only Common Good Fund tenants would place other businesses at a disadvantage. The Common Good Fund did not have the financial resources to develop a hardship scheme for all businesses and in addition Scottish Government Schemes already exist in addition to the extension of the furlough scheme to support business. The purpose of Common Good funding was to provide ‘clear benefit for the wider residents of the Burgh’ of Inverness. It would be difficult to argue that supporting individual businesses would support this purpose.” Further, the City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub Group had been in discussions with the Business Improvement District Group and the Federation of Small Businesses who represented the vast majority of businesses in the City. The Sub Group were happy to discuss with these Groups on how to improve the overall situation for businesses in Inverness. Therefore, given the above points, it was felt that the terms of the Notice of Motion could not be supported.
- It would be checked with the City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub Group if the Group’s Minutes could be circulated to all City of Inverness Area Committee Members for information immediately following the Sub Group meetings.

Thereafter, Mr R MacWilliam, seconded by Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, **MOVED** the terms of the Notice of Motion as detailed.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mr G Ross, seconded by Mrs H Carmichael, moved not to support the Motion.

On a vote being taken between Mr MacWilliam’s Motion and Mr Ross’s Amendment, the votes were cast as follows:-

Motion: Mr I Brown, Mrs Campbell-Sinclair, Mr K Gowans, Ms E Knox, Mr R MacWilliam

Amendment: Mr R Balfour, Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Graham, Mrs H Carmichael, Mr J Gray, Mr D MacPherson; Mrs E McAllister, Mrs T Robertson, Mr G Ross, Mr C Smith

Abstention: Mr B Boyd

Mr Ross's **AMENDMENT** was carried by 12 votes to 5.

Decision

The Committee **AGREED** not to support the Motion.

(iii) This council undertakes to achieve "Living Wage" designation status for Inverness to provide benefit and support for lower paid employees, while improving the reputation of businesses. This will be prioritised to enhance our COVID-19 recovery. The CIAC undertakes to bring a report to the next meeting of CIAC to take this forward.

During discussion, the following points were considered:-

- It was highlighted that this Motion would encourage businesses and organisations to become "Living Wage" employers, encourage suppliers and those who rent premises to adopt the scheme. There were many businesses and organisations who were already "Living Wage" employers such as The Highland Council, NHS Highland and High Life Highland. It was particularly relevant to Inverness given the significant tourism industry and the common sectors for low wages were tourism, hospitality, retail, leisure and the care sector. If Inverness was to achieve "Living Wage" designation, it would enhance the reputation of Inverness as a responsible City and build confidence in the area.
- A view was expressed that while the aspiration of a "Living Wage" was commendable, caution was expressed regarding undertaking to achieve this, as it was not something the Council could do. The Council adhered to and promoted the living wage but it could not mandate that other businesses do and it was the wrong time to push for this given the Covid-19 health crises. It was suggested that the Motion be amended to reflect that the City of Inverness Area Committee has the ambition to achieve "Living Wage" designation status for Inverness.

Thereafter, Mr K Gowan's seconded by Mrs Campbell-Sinclair **MOVED** the terms of the Notice of Motion as detailed.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mrs C Caddick, seconded by Mr D MacPherson, moved that the terms of the Notice of Motion be amended to reflect that the City of Inverness Area Committee has the ambition to achieve "Living Wage" designation status for Inverness.

On a vote being taken between Mr Gowan's Motion and Mrs Caddick's Amendment, the votes were cast as follows:-

Motion: Mr B Boyd, Mr I Brown, Mrs Campbell-Sinclair, Mr K Gowans, Mr A Graham, Mr J Gray, Ms E Knox, Mr R MacWilliam, Mrs E McAllister

Amendment: Mr R Balfour, Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mrs M Davidson, Mr A Jarvie, Mrs I Mackenzie, Mr D MacPherson, Mrs T Robertson, Mr G Ross, Mr C Smith

Mrs Caddick's **AMENDMENT** was carried by 11 votes to 9 .

Decision

The Committee **AGREED** that the City of Inverness Area Committee has the ambition to achieve "Living Wage" designation status for Inverness to provide benefit and support for lower paid employees, while improving the reputation of businesses. This will be prioritised to enhance our COVID-19 recovery. The CIAC undertakes to bring a report to the next meeting of the CIAC to take this forward.

5. Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 – Main Issues Report Plana Leasachaidh Ionadail Linne Mhoireibh A-staigh 2 – Aithisg Phrìomh Chùisean

There had been circulated Report No CIA/25/20 dated 5 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment.

Officers summarised and explained the report and the contents of Appendix 1 and clarified that the recommendations in the report should include the following updates, provided verbally:-

- the Inverness Settlement Development Area white boundary as shown on the maps on pages 103, 109, 117 and 122 of Appendix 1 was correct, not the boundary shown on the higher resolution maps on pages 186 to 189; and
- that an additional site 115, The Tower, Westhill had been erroneously omitted from Appendix 1 but properly assessed and therefore should be included in the published Main Issues Report as a Non-Preferred site.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- the Development Plans Team were thanked for their work on the Plan;
- Council staff should do everything possible to respond to community requests for meetings during the consultation period including, if permissible at that time, face to face events;
- the reluctance of some landowners to release allocated sites for development should be taken into account and solutions such as compulsory purchase considered;
- Housing in the countryside and rural development in general should be encouraged particularly given the increasing desire and ability to work from home;
- the Appendix 1 reference to the need for traffic management measures on Ardersier High Street should be strengthened given the proposed Economic Development Area designation at Fort George and the traffic implications that a change of use of that site could have;
- local communities could be confused by the lack of housing capacity figures for sites in the Main Issues Report;
- support was voiced for the recommended preferred approaches on self-build, affordable housing, accommodating the ageing population, and lower

- carbon heating systems, but concern was expressed as to how these new policies might affect viability for developers and householders;
- the purpose and accuracy of the housing in the countryside Hinterland boundary between Daviot and Tomatin was queried;
 - it was queried whether there was sufficient capacity in schools, sports facilities, and other infrastructure to support the level of growth suggested;
 - several Inverness City site-specific queries were raised and addressed regarding the justification for the preferences set out in Appendix 1;
 - clarification was sought that the amber colour of the Loch Ness tourism corridor notation on the Spatial Strategy Map was not an indication of doubts about the Council's preference to support it and was an indication of the special value Loch Ness represented to the economy;
 - assurance was sought that flooding issues, particularly at Slackbuie and Milton of Leys, had been taken into account in determining the site preferences;
 - concern was expressed at the expense of some sources of renewable / green energy sources, particularly for heating homes;
 - there was a desire for legacy sites from previous plans within the older parts of Inverness that had not come forward for development to be reconsidered;
 - assurance was sought that the mix of housing types and sizes on each housing site reflected those required to meet the needs of the Housing Register;
 - the Plan should better promote access to and the quality and attractiveness of the City's waterfront;
 - clarification was offered that the Fort George training area was not likely to be surplus to MoD requirements and that the relevant Economic Development Area text and map in Appendix 1 should reflect this; and
 - the reasons for non-preferring the currently allocated sites north of Tomatin were queried; and
 - assurance was sought and provided that the Plan would come back to the Committee after the consultation period, prior to a final decision.

Following a brief adjournment, Mrs Carmichael, seconded by Mrs Davidson, **moved** the recommendations as detailed in the report.

Mr Gowans, seconded by Ms Knox, moved as an **amendment** to accept the recommendations as detailed in the report with the exception of IN85 remaining designated as Greenspace as cited in the current Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.

Mr Jarvie, seconded by Mr Smith, moved as a **second amendment**, to accept the recommendations as detailed in the report with the exception of an additional Hinterland consultation option to limit the southern reach of the Hinterland to a boundary of approximately of the C1068 road through Daviot and the C1056 to the north east, with a transition to housing in the countryside south of this.

The Clerk explained that although usual practice was to vote two amendments against one another, in this instance, in accordance with Standing Order 26, as the amendments related to separate issues within the report, they would each be voted against the motion.

On a vote being taken between Mrs Carmichael's motion and Mr Gowan's amendment, the votes were cast as follows:-

Motion: Mr Balfour, Mrs Caddick, Miss Campbell, Mrs Carmichael, Mrs Davidson, Mr Gray, Mr Macpherson, Mrs McAllister, Mrs Robertson, Mr Ross
Amendment: Mr Boyd, Mr Brown, Mrs Campbell-Sinclair, Mr Gowans, Mr Jarvie, Ms Knox, Mrs MacKenzie, Mr MacWilliam, Mr Smith
Abstentions: None

Mrs Carmichael's **MOTION** was carried by 10 votes to 9.

On a vote being taken between Mrs Carmichael's motion and Mr Jarvie's amendment, the votes were cast as follows

Motion: Mr Balfour, Mr Brown, Mrs Caddick, Miss Campbell, Mrs Carmichael, Mrs Davidson, Mr Gowans, Mr Gray, Mr Macpherson, Mr MacWilliam, Mrs McAllister, Mrs Robertson, Mr Ross
Amendment: Mr Boyd, Mr Jarvie, Mrs MacKenzie, Mr Smith
Abstentions: Mrs Campbell-Sinclair, Ms Knox

Mrs Carmichael's **MOTION** was carried by 13 votes to 4, with 2 abstentions.

Decision

The Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to include the verbal update provided by officers that:-
 - a. the Inverness Settlement Development Area white boundary as shown on the maps on pages 103, 109, 117 and 122 of Appendix 1 was correct, not the boundary shown on the higher resolution maps on pages 186 to 189;
 - b. that an additional site 115, The Tower, Westhill had been erroneously omitted from Appendix 1 but properly assessed and therefore should be included in the published Main Issues Report as a Non-Preferred site;
- ii. **AGREED** the Appendix 1 reference to the need for traffic management measures in Ardersier High Street should be strengthened given the proposed Economic Development Area designation at Fort George and the traffic implications that a change of use of that site could have;
- iii. **AGREED** the Plan should better promote access to and the quality and attractiveness of the City's waterfront;
- iv. **AGREED** the Fort George training area was not likely to be surplus to MoD requirements and that the relevant Economic Development Area text and map in Appendix 1 should reflect this;
- v. **APPROVED** the Main Issues Report (as applicable to this committee area) to be published for public consultation, accepting that a number of minor presentational and typographical changes will be made prior to publication;
- vi. **AGREED** the approach to consultation outlined in paragraph 6.1 of this report; and
- vii. **NOTED** the important role that the plan will play in addressing the Climate & Ecological Emergency, economic recovery, and in taking forward the Council's agreed Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy recently submitted to Scottish Government.

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

**a) Financial Monitoring and Capital Project Report
Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail agus Pròiseactan Calpa**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/26/20 dated 5 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Resources and Finance and the Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place.

In particular, it was advised that the external fabric works on the Town House was progressing well and would be concluded as soon as possible. Also, the Victorian Market project would commence in January, 2021.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the financial monitoring report to 30 September 2020; and that overall expenditure was within agreed budgets; and
- ii. the current status of capital projects.

**b) Grant Applications over £10,000
Iartasan Tabhartais thar £10,000**

Declarations of Interest:

Mr K Gowans declared a financial interest in this item as a family member was an employee of High Life Highland and would not participate if the High Life Highland application was discussed or voted on.

The undernoted Members declared a non-financial interest in this item for the reasons listed 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 their involvement in the discussion:

**Mrs I MacKenzie and Mr J Gray – as regular attendees at Crown Church
Mr A Graham – as a family member was a volunteer with Blythwood Care
Mr A Jarvie – as a Director of High Life Highland
Mrs C Caddick – as a member of Inshes Community Association**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/27/20 dated 3 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Resources and Finance.

In this connection, there had been circulated separately a copy of supporting documentation as Booklet A.

In particular, the recommended funding for Inshes Community Association towards Inshes Scooter and Wheeled Sports Park was welcomed and was very positive for that area of Inverness.

Thereafter, the Committee **APPROVED** the following applications for funding:-

- a) Inshes Community Association – £30,000
- b) Crown Church Inverness. Church of Scotland - £30,000

- c) Blythswood Care - £20,000
- d) Merkinch Local Nature Reserve Boardwalk - £22,500

and **AGREED** to refuse the application from High Life Highland for £10,300.

**7. Housing Performance Report – 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020
Aithisg Coileanaidh Taigheadais – 1 Giblean 2020 gu 30 Sultain 2020**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/28/20 dated 4 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Housing and Property.

In particular, reference was made to the significant increase in Tenancy offers refused and given that it was important to understand why Tenancy offers were refused, it was requested that further information on this be submitted in the next report to the Committee. It was explained that the general reasons related to changes in circumstances compared to people's applications or their housing needs had changed. Also, the increase was also partly due to the backlog in housing allocations.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020; and
- ii. that further information in relation to the reasons for the significant increase in Tenancy offers refused would be included in the next report.

**8. Inverness Area Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2021-2022
Prògram Calpa Cunntas Teachd-a-steach Taigheadais 21-22**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/29/20 dated 3 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Housing and Property.

The Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the allocation of resources to Inverness Area as set out at 5.7;
- ii. **NOTED** the guideline investment priorities as set out in sections 5.2 and 5.3 of the report;
- iii. **AGREED** the proposed one-year HRA Capital Programme for Inverness Area 2021-22 as set out in Appendix 1;
- iv. **NOTED** the position relating the current year HRA Capital Programme; and
- v. **NOTED** that updates on the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme would continue to be provided through ward briefings and at future Local Committees as requested by local Members, in addition to reporting to Housing and Property Committee.

Due to technical issues, Mr G Ross took the Chair during the following item and for the remainder of the meeting (excluding items 10 and 11 which had been taken earlier in the day)

**9. Area Structures Report 2019/20
Aithisg Structaran Sgìre 2019/20**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/30/20 dated 1 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, the Leader of the Council referred to a wooden bridge with no sides near the substation on the road past Auchterawe. She requested that it be inspected and the findings reported to her.

Detailed discussion took place on the Infirmary Bridge, during which the following main issues were raised:-

- the bridge was iconic and of historic significance as well as being an important active travel route for locals and visitors;
- it appeared to be a question of when, rather than if, the bridge would close;
- it was requested that the required works outlined in the report be scoped out so that detailed invitations to tender were ready to be issued as soon as the opportunity arose;
- on the point being raised, it was confirmed that the bridge was included in both the general and principal inspection programmes. It had recently undergone a principal inspection and would be subject to monthly inspections going forward to ensure there was no significant deterioration;
- immediate action was necessary to prevent further deterioration and it was suggested that it be recommended to the full Council on 17 December 2020 that capital funding be allocated to allow the required works to be undertaken at the earliest opportunity. However, other Members were of the view that a recommendation to Council was not the best way forward and suggested that a Members' briefing take place as proposed in the report. It was important to make haste but in a measured and careful manner, and a package of funding needed to be put in place from various sources;
- it was emphasised that it was a Council bridge, not a Common Good asset;
- it having been queried whether the required works were a "sticking plaster" and the same issues were likely to arise again in a few years, it was explained that 20 to 25 years appeared to be the length of time between major repairs on a bridge of that sort;
- information having been sought on the cost of a replacement bridge for comparison purposes, the Chair suggested that this be provided at the proposed Members' briefing;
- on the point being raised, it was confirmed that a variety of potential external funding sources, including Historic Environment Scotland, were being explored;
- it was necessary to repair the bridge in a way that maintained its original appearance as much as possible; and
- there were other bridges in and around the Ness Islands and it was suggested that they could be audited and included in any potential funding package.

In responding to the points raised, the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment explained that, whilst the Infirmary Bridge was important to Inverness, within the overall Council context there were a range of other bridge repairs that might be seen as equally or more important, particularly given that the Infirmary Bridge was pedestrian only. It was emphasised that officers were committed to putting together a funding package that would deliver the required repairs and regular reports would be provided to the Committee which it was hoped would alleviate Members' concerns.

Following discussion, Mr G Ross, seconded by Mrs M Davidson, **moved** the recommendations in the report.

As an **amendment**, Mr A Jarvie, seconded by Mr C Smith, moved that the Committee request the Council to agree that capital funding be allocated to allow repair to be undertaken as soon as possible and prevent a snowballing repair bill.

On a vote being taken, the **motion** received 13 votes and the **amendment** received 5 votes, with no abstentions, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:

Mr I Brown, Mrs C Caddick, Miss J Campbell, Mrs H Carmichael, Mrs M Davidson, Mr K Gowans, Mr J Gray, Ms E Knox, Mr D Macpherson, Mr R MacWilliam, Mrs E McAllister, Mrs T Robertson and Mr G Ross.

For the Amendment:

Mr B Boyd, Mr A Graham, Mr A Jarvie, Mrs I MacKenzie and Mr C Smith.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

- i. the general contents of the Structures Report; and
- ii. the recent deterioration of the Infirmary Bridge and the implications of the deterioration and consequential maintenance work urgently required.

It was further **NOTED** that updates on the Infirmary Bridge would be provided to the Committee in due course.

**10. Community Wellbeing and Recovery – Related Projects
Mathas agus Ath-shlànachadh Coimhearsnachd – Pròiseactan
Buntainneach**

There had been circulated Report No CIA/31/20 dated 10 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment, and the Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place.

During discussion, the following main issues were considered:-

- Officers were thanked for the report, which contained feedback from recent workshops held with Members;
- reference was made to the unstable economic situation many individuals and businesses were facing as a result of the Covid-19 crisis and it was suggested some of the Common Good Fund underspend be held back for 2021;
- concern was expressed that the proposed £20k for a rebranding / marketing campaign was insufficient to achieve suitable outcomes. Investment in a longer term, more comprehensive 6-month strategic campaign was suggested, though would require significantly more money and planning;
- the Inverness Events Manager was retiring and was thanked for his valued contribution to many events and wished well for the future;
- noting that the underspent funds had been for events, arts and entertainment, it was suggested that they should be used to support struggling artists and musicians;

- concern was expressed about the process being used to re-allocate the underspend, the late issuing of the report, and the lack of detail on the proposals. Attention was drawn to the role of the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee to scrutinise detailed applications for Common Good Funds. It was proposed the applications therefore be referred to a special meeting of the Sub-Committee, with any over £10k being referred back to the City of Inverness and Area Committee, in accordance with Standing Orders. However, in relation to the proposed award of (up to) £30,000 to MFR Mission Christmas, it was acknowledged that there was a need to determine this award before Christmas and, as the Committee was broadly supportive of this in principle, it was suggested power be delegated to the Inverness City Area Manager to make the award, subject to the unanimous agreement of all Members of the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee. It was also pointed out that the Common Good Fund Sub-Committee had many more applications than there were funds available and the projects detailed in the report should be considered alongside other applications;
- reference was made to the considerable challenges facing the city centre, including the poor maintenance of some buildings and the problem of absent landlords. Various projects that were ongoing at present to address some of the issues;
- in response to queries, it was explained that the intention was for the £40,000 referred to in the report to create a grant budget to which third sector organisations could apply to support specific projects and activities which would be managed by the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee and this had been a proposed outcome of the Members' workshop; and
- raising awareness was not considered a sufficiently specific outcome for a campaign to tackle discrimination, which should detail a more specific behaviour change.

The Committee:-

- NOTED** the feedback from the workshop with Inverness groups and the key issues and challenges identified;
- NOTED** the update on the ongoing review of events and festivals and the wider arts and that a paper will be presented to the February committee on a new approach and programme for going forward;
- NOTED** the update on City Centre infrastructure projects identified in the August paper and how it is proposed to progress these; and
- AGREED** the applications detailed in the report recommendations be referred back to the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee, to be assessed and scrutinised in the usual manner, with applications over £10k being recommended to the City of Inverness and Area Committee for approval in accordance with the Common Good Fund standing orders, with the exception of the proposed award of (up to) £30,000 to MFR Mission Christmas, for which, due to the necessity of considering this before Christmas, power would be delegated to the Inverness City Area Manager to make the award, subject to the unanimous agreement of all Members of the Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee.

Additional Item – Covid-19 Inverness City Recovery – Rose Street Multi-Storey Car Park – Tarrif Adjustment

There had been circulated Report No CIA/34/20 dated 12 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, the following main issues were raised:

- the proposal to offer two hours of free parking was welcomed to encourage people to shop in the city centre; and
- concern was expressed that in order to make the proposal cost-neutral, the 3-12 hour tariff had been increased slightly, making it comparable to the Eastgate car park tariff, and might cause people to go to the Eastgate parking instead. A summary was provided of the method and reasoning behind the proposed temporary price structure.

The Committee **NOTED** the amended Tariff schedule that has a cost neutral impact on service budgets and the decision to implement the Tariff adjustments to be taken by the Executive Chief officer, Infrastructure and Environment under delegated powers.

11. CCTV- Public Space City CCTV System

There had been circulated Reissued Report No CIA/32/20 with changes made to paragraph 4.2 and 4.10 of the original report dated 9 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Environment and Infrastructure, the Inverness Area Commander and Police Scotland.

During discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the usefulness of CCTV as a deterrent was highlighted, therefore it would be helpful if public awareness of the cameras could be increased, including their mention in any crime-related press releases;
- in response to a request for regular reports on the functionality of the CCTV system and future investment required, a report was due to be submitted to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee in early 2021. It was important faults were reported early and urgently addressed;
- attention was drawn to the safety benefits of CCTV and the importance of having modern cameras in good working order. A rolling refresh programme was suggested within the City Wards;
- it was hoped Members would be able to visit Burnett Road Police Station to view the CCTV camera feeds;
- stakeholder input should be sought, with particular mention of Community Councils;
- it would be helpful to recommence the annual submission of a report on CCTV to the Community Safety Partnership; and
- information was sought and provided on the level of communication and joint working with the company who managed the CCTV system and arrangements for organising repairs.

Thereafter, the Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** the repair and improvement works undertaken to repair damage sustained by electrical storms and through works by statutory undertakers;
- ii. **NOTED** the outcomes achieved by the Inverness CCTV System as reported by Police Scotland; and

- iii. **AGREED** the proposal that a report on the options for development of public space CCTV (both in Inverness and the Highlands), with updates on the operation of the City CCTV system, is presented to the City Area Committee.
- iv. **NOTED** a report would be submitted to the Economy and infrastructure Committee on the functionality of CCTV cameras and future investment requirements;
- v. **AGREED** to give consideration to the creation of a rolling refresh programme for CCTV systems within the City Wards to ensure they are maintained; and
- vi. **AGREED** consideration be given to recommencing the annual submission of a report on CCTV within the City Wards to the Community Safety Partnership.

12. Town Centre Fund

There had been circulated Report No CIA/33/20 dated 10 November 2020 by the Executive Chief Officer, Infrastructure and Environment.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- last year there had been some confusion as to what constituted a town centre in terms of the Scottish Government's criteria and information was sought as to whether that had been clarified to ensure that projects were not rejected for an administrative reason;
- support was expressed for Option 3, as recommended in the report, and the need for a short timeframe for applications was emphasised;
- it was queried whether applications had to be for new projects or whether existing projects that had run out of funding were eligible;
- the inclusion of Ardersier in the list of eligible settlements was welcomed and it was queried whether Milton of Leys included Inshes, which was in the same locality. Likewise, it was queried whether Westhill included Cradlehall and whether Inverness Campus fell under the eligible settlements; and
- information was sought on the mechanism for making an application.

In responding to the points raised, the Regeneration and Employment Team Leader explained that there was a high degree of flexibility in terms of eligibility and it would be for Members to determine what the final projects were. There would be a light-touch project proposal pro forma and there were three key criteria, namely, it must be capital, deliverable within the specified timescale and in or adjacent to one of the identified localities.

The Committee **AGREED** that a call for projects be issued as soon as possible and that a Special Meeting of the City of Inverness Area Committee be convened to consider submissions and agree which projects would benefit from Town Centre Fund investment.

13. Minutes Geàrr-chunntas

There had been circulated various Minutes for noting or approval as appropriate.

In relation to the Minutes of the City of Inverness Area Committee on 27 August 2020, it was commented that item 7 – City Recovery – did not mention the £341k underspend from the Events and Festivals Budget. Similarly, the amount of funding that had been secured to implement measures to reduce bus traffic on

Margaret Street and Academy Street (£442,855) had not been specified. It was also suggested that it would helpful to provide officers' names as well as their titles.

The Committee otherwise:-

- i. **NOTED** the Minutes of the City of Inverness Area Committee held on 27 August 2020;
- ii. **NOTED** the Minutes of the Victorian Market Stakeholder Group held on 29 September 2020;
- iii. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group held on 17 August 2020;
- iv. **APPROVED** the Minutes of the Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee held on 2 November 2020; and
- v. **NOTED** the Minutes of the City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub-Group held on 21 September 2020, 8 October 2020, and 9 November 2020.

The meeting ended at 6.35 pm.