

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

Minutes of the Meeting of the **Inverness City Arts Working Group** held Remotely on Thursday 10 December, 2020 at 3.30 p.m.

**Present:**

Mrs H Carmichael  
Mr I Brown  
Mrs I Mackenzie  
Mr G Ross

**In Attendance:**

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager  
Mr J Kelman, Principal Project Manager  
Ms R Cleland, Corporate Communications and Resilience Manager  
Mr D McKenzie, Corporate Communications & Engagement Officer  
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant

**Also in attendance:-**

Ms C Shankland, Exhibitions Officer, High Life Highland  
Mr T Surtees, Sans facon  
Mr C Blanc, Sans facon  
Mr K Huneck, OSA  
Mr B Truempier, OSA  
Mr M McCann, Simpson Builders

**Mrs I MacKenzie in the Chair**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**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 24 February, 2020.

The City Area Manager advised that since the last meeting the Covid-19 pandemic had intervened and prevented for a considerable period of time, progress being made on the My Ness project. However, Members were

reassured that matters relating to decisions taken on the Gathering Place (My Ness Project) had been taken in-line with governance and had reached the point where Members were now invited to approve the final detailed design. The project had progressed under operational management protocols and in line with the Councils Scheme of Delegation. All appropriate governance had been applied to the project and reporting would continue to be made to the City of Inverness Area Committee and the Working Group accordingly.

Arising from the minutes, the following matters were reported:-

- Reference was made to the additional access works for the project and these had been promoted and detailed in the updates provided and the operational decisions taken;
- The Fisherman's Hut project was a separate independent project and The Ness Angling Club had decided not to proceed with it and it was noted that the Club now intended to refurbish their current Hut at the site. The Ness Angling Club remained very supportive of the My Ness and would continue to work with the Council on the project and had expressed their appreciation for all the assistance provided by the Council and the Project team.

The Working Group **NOTED** the update.

## **5. River Connections Public Art Project Programme**

There was circulated Report No ICArts 03/20 by the Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place dated 2 December 2020. The report provided an update on progress made on the Project Programme since the last Working Group meeting.

There was a presentation by the Artist on the final detailed design of The Gathering Place (My Ness Project) that Members were invited to approve. The final detailed design had been completed in terms of all the technical design issues that had to be addressed as part of the design and build contract programme. Full details of the design were provided and programme of works which, subject to approval, would be ready for installation in the Spring of 2021.

In discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- Details were provided of the measures taken in the engineering and construction methods of the structure to alleviate any problems that may occur with high river levels.
- it was welcomed that a handrail had been included in the design of the structure which would be similar to that on the flood wall on the river ness.
- It was welcomed that the design of the structure blended in with the surrounding area of the site; that it was a good width and the walls were a good height for wheel chair users.
- The design was iconic and unique for the City of Inverness and would be a great asset for the City.
- The final design had been submitted to the Council's Building Control team and their comments had been addressed and complied with.

The project team were commended for their commitment and professionalism in the work carried out on the project. Members support to Officers on the project was also appreciated. Creative Scotland's support to the project was also commended and their team had helped this project progress.

Details were also provided of the educational aspects that were incorporated in the project. Members were reminded that one of the conditions of the additional funding from Creative Scotland was that the educational elements should not be lost. It had been agreed that the educational element be extended to the whole project and a further £2,000 was secured from the Art Fund 'Sculpture Around You' project to work with UHI Art students to deliver a talk /workshop on developing a public art commission. However, due to the pandemic and consequent reduction in the funder's budget, this funding had now been withdrawn. Therefore, other options that might be available under the current Covid-19 climate, were for the Artist for the My Ness project to connect with UHI Art students virtually so that they would have some insight into how you create a public piece of art. This could be done in the Spring to coincide with the construction of the project with students also being invited to the project launch in the Summer. Alternatively, other funding could be sought to do the original face to face project when Covid-19 restrictions were lifted.

Members supported moving forward with the educational element of the project and for it to be done virtually with the Artist providing an online Masterclass to students. The Artist's expertise and knowledge on producing a piece of public art would be very informative and a tremendous opportunity for students. Once the project was complete there may be opportunities to work with local schools. It was advised that these views would be relayed to Creative Scotland as the educational aspect was a key part of their requirement for funding.

Thereafter, the Working Group:-

- i. **APPROVED** the final detailed design of The Gathering Place (My Ness Project) noting that the final design did not materially differ from the concept design previously approved. Further, that the final design also falls within the terms of all existing statutory consents.
- ii. **NOTED** that the final adjustments to the design of the My Ness project fall within the current budget allocation and that the project remains fully funded.
- iii. **NOTED** that the Ness Angling Club have decided not to proceed with their project to replace the Fisherman's Hut and that this decision does not prevent the construction of the My Ness art piece.
- iv. **NOTED** that installation of the My Ness art piece is scheduled to commence in early spring 2021.

## 6. Financial Monitoring

There had been circulated Report No ICArts 04/20 by the Inverness City Area Manager dated 02 December 2020. The report set out the revenue monitoring position for the period to 30 November 2020 and showed the actual expenditure to date.

The Working Group **NOTED** the content of the report.

## 7. **Press relations and forthcoming PR opportunities and risks**

The Corporate Communications and Resilience Manager providing options for proactively engaging the press on the My Ness art piece. A press release had been drafted regarding the art piece confirming approval of the final design; that it was within budget and complied with City of Inverness Area Committee requirements.

Ideas discussed regarding public relations opportunities were the digital masterclass to UHI Art students; a media interview with the artists to talk about the art piece and how it would be built; time lapse photography and drone footage of the construction of the art piece.

Thereafter, the Working Group **AGREED** that a draft press release on progress with the My Ness project and a public relations plan with timelines would be submitted to Members for comment and approval.

## 8. **Date of next Meeting**

The Committee **NOTED** that the date of the next meeting would be confirmed as the project progressed.

The meeting ended at 5.15 pm.