

**City and Area of Inverness Economic Recovery Sub-Group
Wednesday 9 December 2020 at 2:00pm**

ACTION NOTE

Present:

Cllr Graham Ross (GR), Cllr Trish Robertson (TR); Cllr Janet Campbell (JC); Cllr Isabelle Mackenzie (IM); Cllr Margaret Davidson (MD); David Haas (DH), Inverness City Manager; Allan Maguire (AM), Head of Development & Regeneration; Alison MacNeill (AMN), Senior Public Relations Officer; Mike Smith (MS), Inverness BID; Alan Rawlinson (AR), Visit Inverness Loch Ness

	Items	Note/Action Agreed	Action For	Action Undertaken
1.	Welcome/Apologies for Absence			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GR welcomed Members and ran through the usual protocols to be adhered to during the meeting • NOTED apologies received from Cllr Bill Boyd 		
2.	Inverness BID Update – Mike Smith			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS expressed thanks on behalf of the City Centre Businesses to the Highland Council and the ICGF along with the effort from Officers in engaging with BID and organisations throughout the difficult period • 2-hour free parking at Rose Street has been well received and feedback is positive • Agreement was reached with the Roads Department for Marks & Spencer's to use Hamilton Street from Saturday until Christmas to manage queuing for their food hall. This has created a positive initiative • MS expressed how crucial the festive period is for businesses as well as hospitality • Need to continue building public confidence with positive messages and encouragement. NOTED the Bounceback campaign is continuing to work up a programme to create and make people feel more confident in the City Centre. Links are being made with Environmental Health, and they are coordinating patrols with the Police to ensure high standards are obtained and confidence maintained • MS highlighted concerns surrounding the end of furlough in March and asked for these to be highlighted further • Potential for more redundancies with many businesses just holding on, it is thought many don't have resources for a bad January/February • NOTED BID are happy to look at supporting any initiatives • Feedback from Businesses continues to show that existing Spaces for People interventions seem to be putting customers off. BID Boards view is that Academy Street is working ok but there are concerns around Millburn Road and Castle/Bridge St is having an effect on people coming into the Centre 		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTED Members would like to see Stagecoach more active in terms of public travel to ensure a joined-up approach on city transport with possibility of drop off points or age group assigned buses to ensure confidence • NOTED the importance of ensuring public confidence and emphasizing how safe the Centre is to bring back much needed footfall • NOTED GR declared an interest in Debenhams • NOTED the importance of Corporate Communications Team working with BID to emphasise shop local, also suggestion of using Environmental Health • NOTED MS is to be invited back to January CARG to feedback on City Centre over the festive period. Also, the possibility of inviting Colin Howell in terms of Active Travel/Spaces for People 	<p align="center">AMN MS/ OFFICERS</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Hospitality Update – Alan Rawlinson</p>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTED apologies received from Michael Golding CEO of VILN • AR updated Members on what Visit Inverness Loch Ness have been doing and the activities they have carried out which included Webinars, surveys and media campaigns with discussion around the area bounceback capability • Positive news that there is still interest in the local area from the UK Market, there are lower international enquires and this isn't expected to increase dramatically again until late 2021/2022 • Over a third of Scots are making the Highlands their Staycation • VILN are already doing several things to ensure communication from newsletters to surveys • The next 6 months are expected to be difficult • NOTED MD highlighted the importance of getting the news out to those who will benefit • NOTED MD declared an interest as an associate Member on VILN • Plans underway on possible warden system. MD advised she is keen to join Loch Ness potential into this • Place Planning 2040 Document NOTED MD is in conversation with Michael Golding on how to pull together an effective plan around Loch Ness • NOTED the importance of having some kind of event programme moving forward to once again drive footfall into the area • NOTED AR was invited to comeback to a future meeting to update • DH advised there is a joint marketing proposal coming forward to create opportunity across boundary lines and boost the economy. A marketing 	<p align="center">OFFICERS</p>	

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		campaign is to be created that builds on what has been done already to highlight the advantages. NOTED DH hopes to provide a presentation progressing on this in the new year	DH	
4.	Notes of Previous Meeting			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOTED the note from the previous meeting was AGREED as accurate 		
5.	Matters Arising from Previous Notes			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlining of Streetscape- DH advised conversations are ongoing regarding the streamlining of bollards, column lighting and repainting of street furniture. NOTED DH hopes to comeback with a proposal early in the new year Market stalls- DH advised discussion has taken place and they are working flexibly to suit needs Free Parking- this has been implemented, BID have welcomed the opportunity and feel it is impacting on footfall in the city Campervan Facilities- GR advised meetings are ongoing with Officers on this and facilities at V8 Café are being looked at along with other areas in the City Street Cleaning- DH advised this is in hand with Alan McKinnie. DH is also actively working on the cleaning of the three virtues and will provide a further update once available 	DH DH	
6.	Infrastructure Projects Update – Allan Maguire			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former Farmfoods- Nearing completion, with just some external works left to do. Hoped to have tenants in early January Castle Project- Demolition of old cell block to start next week. Fiona Hampton has done consultation with Members. Progressing well Parrot Pines Site- Currently on hold due to items found of archaeological interest Victorian Market redevelopment- proceeding for start on site in January Arnott's Building- Still finalising legal issues. Meeting scheduled for Friday to discuss how to keep Barron Taylor Street open as much as possible while still maintaining H&S 		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Link- Tenders back. There is a meeting with the owner of the land tomorrow and following this it is hoped the contract will be let. Looking at start on site January for 6-week period • Old Chisholm's Building- Progressing well • NOTED MD highlighted the importance of ensuring there is news published on the Raining Stairs prize • NOTED the importance of using national press to show Inverness successful development projects • NOTED IM raised questions around the empty spaces on upper floors in buildings. AM advised it has been a real challenge as many are owned by trusts. It is hoped the Arnott's Building will stimulate interest in this • NOTED IM also raised questions around Viewhill House. AM advised this is a real challenge but in the next financial year there are plans to look at this again to see if anything can be done • NOTED CPO powers are being used for the first time in Carrbridge if successful it is hoped this can be done with other buildings that require these powers 	AMN/CORP COMMS	
7.	Members Suggestions/ideas for potential projects to aid City Recovery			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTED GR welcomed Members to send any suggestions for consideration in an email direct 		
8.	Date of Next Meeting			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTED thanks to all officers for their contributions on work done so far • NOTED the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 21st January at 11am 		