

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

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held **remotely** on Monday 9 August 2021 at 9.30 am.

**Present:**

Mr I Brown  
Mrs C Caddick  
Miss J Campbell  
Mrs H Carmichael

Mr A Graham  
Mrs I Mackenzie  
Mrs E McAllister

**Officials in Attendance:**

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager  
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, City Manager's Office  
Ms F MacBain, Committee Administrator, Performance & Governance Service

**Mr D Haas, then Mrs H Carmichael, in the Chair**

**1. Appointment of Chair for the Meeting**

As a result of the resignation from the Council of the previous Chair, Mr G Ross, the Committee **AGREED:-**

- i. to postpone election of a substantive Chair for the Sub-Committee until after the forthcoming City of Inverness and Area Committee, at which two new Members of the Sub-Committee would be appointed; and
- ii. that Mrs Helen Carmichael would Chair this meeting from this point onwards.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were submitted for Mr A Jarvie.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Item 6 – Mrs I Mackenzie, Miss J Campbell, Mrs C Caddick and Mrs H Carmichael (non-financial)

Item 7c – Mrs C Caddick (non-financial)

Item 11 – Mrs C Caddick (non-financial)

**4. 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 it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 6 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

## **5. Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee Annual Report**

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/09/21 dated 9 July 2021 by the Inverness City Area Manager, who summarised the report and corrected the omission in the report of Mrs I Mackenzie as a member of the Sub-Committee.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:-

- assurance was sought and provided that applicants were asked to refer to Common Good Fund assistance on publicity materials;
- the new approach to reduce the number of repeat grants provided was welcomed; and
- it was not clear in Appendix 5 of the report which of the civic events detailed had gone ahead and whether the allocated budget had been spent.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the Report prior it being presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 26 August 2021.

## **6. Requests for Financial Assistance 2021/22**

**The following Members declared non-financial interests in this item for the reasons stated but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that their interests did not preclude them from taking part in the discussion:-**

- **Mrs I Mackenzie as a Council-appointed member of the Inverness Music Festival Association;**
  - **Miss J Campbell as an Eden Court Board member; and**
  - **Mrs H Carmichael as a director of Visit Inverness Loch Ness and a member of Inverness BID.**
- i. There had been circulated Report No. GSC/10/21 dated 30 July 2021 by the Inverness City Area Manager.
  - ii. In this connection, there had been circulated separately a copy of the applications.

The Inverness City Area Manager summarised the report and appendices, and clarified that the wrong application had been included in the printed copy of Booklet E, however the correct application had been submitted electronically.

Members queried progress with a previous application for funding for The Ledge project and it was explained that issues with Planning Permission were holding up the project and that no funds would be paid until the project was able to go ahead.

### **Booklet A – Applications under £5,000**

Inverness Choral Society (£500 sought)  
Centenary Book 1920-2020: Printing and publishing Costs **APPROVED £500**

Inverness Chamber Music Society (£4770 sought)  
2021-2022 Chamber Music Concert Series **APPROVED £4770**

In relation to this application it was clarified that reduced audience capacity due to Covid restrictions would not necessarily result in a reduced requirement for civic officers. Information was sought on when civic officers were likely to be able to return to their usual duties and this was likely to happen when the Council was permitted to admit the public to their buildings again. It was confirmed that the Common Good Fund only paid for civic officer time when they were working at Common Good Fund events and did not fund any Covid-related duties.

### **Booklet B - Applications £5,001 - £10,000**

Inverness Festival Association (£9750 sought)  
Centenary Music Festival **APPROVED £9750**

### **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:-

Visit Inverness Loch Ness (VILN) (£20,000 sought)  
Support sales team promoting Inverness for Business Tourism **AGREED TO RECOMMEND £20,000**

### **Booklet D - Conference Applications**

Change Your World Events Ltd (£16,561 or £9,102 sought, depending venue)  
2022 Change Your World Conference **AGREED TO RECOMMEND £3,000**

Members were supportive of the conference but felt that as it was a commercial venture, the full amount requested could not be supported, noting also that funding had not been sought elsewhere.

### **Booklet E – Partnership Working**

Inverness BID (£2285 sought)  
Coach Friendly Project 2021 **APPROVED £2285**

The Sub- Committee:-

- a. **NOTED** the applications listed in the attached Appendix 7 and detailed in the circulated applications;
- b. **APPROVED** the applications up to £10,000 as indicated;
- c. **AGREED to RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee at its meeting on 26 August 2021 for those applications for more than £10,000, as indicated; and

- d. **NOTED** the allocations made from the small grants budget of £75,000 and the larger grants budget of £200,000.

## 7. Internal Applications

### a. Drone Video Camera

The Sub-Committee considered the application from Communications and Resilience to contribute £500 towards the purchase of a drone to be used for effective communication and promotion of the City/Area.

The Sub-Committee **APPROVED £500** from the City Promotions Budget, subject to a condition that drone footage of Common Good Fund properties be provided and that communication be undertaken with the Planning Service in relation to drone ownership to ensure no unnecessary duplication of purchases was made.

### b. Fraser Park Bowling Club

The Sub-Committee considered the application from Environmental and Amenity Services towards Hedge Removal and Installation of fencing round Fraser Park Bowling Club.

Information was sought and provided on a variety of issues including the following:-

- in response to concerns about wildlife, the Council's ecology officer had been consulted, and a condition would be added to ensure any arrangements were undertaken to the officer's satisfaction;
- ownership of the land and maintenance agreements between the Council and Common Good fund were explained, and Members were reminded that it had been agreed by the City of Inverness and Area Committee that the Common Good Fund would pay 100% of the maintenance costs of the land for ten years, to compensate the Council for having paid 100% of the costs for many years before the joint ownership had come to light. This project was, however, outwith the regular maintenance agreement;
- concern was expressed that local Members had not been kept fully up to date; and
- lease arrangements with the bowling club were summarised in response to a suggestion that the bowling club should contribute to the hedge removal project. It was explained that the club had undertaken to provide improved public access and community/youth engagement activities.

The Committee **APPROVED £12,799**, to be taken from the Other Properties Budget, and subject to there being ongoing communication about the project with local Members and the local community.

### c. City Parks

The Sub-Committee considered the application from Community and Place – Amenity Services for £3,298 towards additional operative hours and the purchase of new bins for Inverness City Parks. Payment would be made from the Other Properties Budget if approved.

Members expressed concern about this project, which it was felt was the responsibility of the Council, and **REFUSED** the application.

#### d. **Inverness Community Partnership**

The Sub-Committee considered the application submitted on behalf of the Inverness Community Partnership for £1,312.50 of assistance towards the pilot project of Young People Wellbeing Packs in Inverness High School.

Issues raised during discussion included the following:

- further information was sought on connectivity with other projects, with particular reference to the Safe, Strong and Free programme that was already operating in schools and the activities of youth workers;
- it was thought that packs with paper and pencils were not appropriate for the target age group (S1 pupils) and that rather than giving physical packs, consideration should be given to improving face to face and online connectivity; and
- the 18-24 age group was possibly more at need of wellbeing assistance during transition from school to work or further education, as there were already programmes operating for school age children;

The Committee **APPROVED £1,312.50** from the Grants Budget, subject to acceptable clarification being provided to the Sub Committee via the Inverness City Area Manager on the issues raised during discussion and detailed above.

### **8. Inverness Gull Project**

There had been circulated Report No GSC/11/21 dated 21 July 2021 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the progress of the Gull Management Project to date and that officers would continue to work closely with Inverness BID and property owners to minimise the impacts of Gulls on the amenity of the City.

### **9. Dunbar Hospital**

The Sub-Committee considered the quote from ICS Specialist Cleaning to clean the Dunbar Hospital Building, noting that the ICGF was liable for a sixth of the cost and that the work would go ahead if the majority of owners were agreeable. The total cost was estimated at £8,400 plus VAT and the ICGF would be asked to pay an equal share divided between the owners of the

building which equated to **£1,400**, which was **APPROVED**, and would come from the Other Properties Budget.

## **10. Seafield Road Resurfacing**

The Sub-Committee considered the request to contribute to the resurfacing to the ICGF owned tar area outside the HIS units on Seafield Road. In the past the ICGF had contributed 20% to the cost of these repairs and HIS 80%.

A quote had been received of £11,271.00 plus VAT and plus £300.00 for lining. This equated to a cost of **£2,314.20 plus VAT** for the ICGF and this was **APPROVED**, to be paid from the Other Properties Budget.

The Sub-Committee also **NOTED** that the road surface would be checked annually and minor repairs dealt with on an annual basis.

## **11. Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders Statue, Station Square**

**Mrs C Caddick declared a non-financial interest in this item as a retired officer and honorary Colonel of the cadets, however she considered the interest to be sufficiently remote and insignificant that she would remain to participate.**

The Sub-Committee **APPROVED** a sum **not to exceed £1,500** towards the painting of the railings round the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders Statue in Station Square and for the cleaning of the statue. This would be paid from the Other Properties Budget.

## **12. Inshes Community Association**

**Mrs C Caddick declared a non-financial interest in this item as a member of Inshes Park Community Association but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interests did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion.**

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** the request from Inshes Community Association to extend the timescale of the grant awarded to them to the end of the current financial year. This would give the group time to source the remainder of the funding required for the project.

## **13. Homologation Requests**

### **a. Northern Meeting Charitable Piping Trust**

**Mrs C Caddick declared a non-financial interest in this item as a Board member of the Piping Trust but, having applied the test outlined in Paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, concluded that her interests did not preclude her from taking part in the discussion.**

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to transfer the grant awarded towards the Northern Meeting Piping Competitions 2021 to the 2022 competitions following the cancellation of the 2021 event due to the Covid pandemic.

b. **Flow Photofest**

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to agree to the revised Flow Photofest Event.

c. **High Street Painting**

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the payment of £500 for painting on the High Street not covered by the Town Centre Fund grant.

#### **14. Evaluation Forms**

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the Evaluation Forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects.

#### **15. Civic Hospitality Requests**

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/12/21 dated 30 July 2021 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 application and any supporting documentation as Booklet F (2021 Scottish Poppy Association, and the 2021 Springfield Scottish Open).

The Sub-Committee:

- a. **NOTED** the implications of COVID 19 Guidance which might act to restrict numbers in attendance or require the cancellation of events at short notice;
- b. **NOTED** that successful applicants would be responsible for their own costs in the event of an event being cancelled or restricted due to the application of COVID 19 Guidance no matter when the event has been cancelled or subjected to restrictions; and
- c. considered the application listed in the attached Appendix 2 and detailed in Booklet F and **AGREED** to delegate power to approve the application to the Inverness City Area Manager.

#### **16. Date of Next Meeting**

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 8 November 2021 at 9.30am via Microsoft Teams.

The meeting ended at 12pm.