

AGENDA ITEM 13ii

The Highland Council City of Inverness Area Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held in the 2nd Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness on Monday 15 August 2022 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Mr C Balance	Mr D Macpherson
Mr M Cameron (via Teams)	Mrs E McAllister
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair	Ms M Reid
Mr A Graham	

In attendance:

Mr D Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Mr S Taylor, Civic and Facilities Team Leader
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, City Area Manager's Office
Miss M Murray, Committee Administrator, Performance and Governance Service

Business

1. Appointment of Chair

Nominations having been sought for the position of Chair of the Sub-Committee, Mrs E McAllister, seconded by Mr D Macpherson, nominated Mr A Graham.

Ms M Reid nominated Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair but failed to find a seconder.

Mr A Graham was therefore appointed as Chair of the Sub-Committee.

Mr Graham proposed that he take on the role for a period of one year and that the matter be revisited in August 2023. The Sub-Committee so **AGREED**.

Mr A Graham then took the Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr C Aitken, Mrs I MacKenzie, Mrs K MacLean and Mr A Sinclair.

3. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the following declaration of interest:-

Item 6: Mrs E McAllister

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 they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 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/07/22 dated 2 August 2022 by the Inverness City Area Manager.

During discussion, the following comments were made:-

- Members welcomed the informative report, which showed the value of the Common Good Fund and how fortunate Inverness was to have it;
- in relation to paragraph 1.1 of the report, which listed the powers delegated to the Sub-Committee, it was suggested that it be highlighted that further detail was provided in Appendix 2;
- attention was drawn to duplicate paragraph numbering and a grammatical error which it was confirmed would be corrected;
- on the point being raised, it was confirmed that thank you letters from grant recipients were circulated to the Sub-Committee. It was added that applicants were required to publicise the fact that the Inverness Common Good Fund had supported the event, and banners were now available for that purpose.

The Sub-Committee otherwise **NOTED** the report prior to it being presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 14 September 2022.

6. Requests for Financial Assistance 2022/23

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/08/22 dated 4 August 2022 by the Inverness City Area Manager. A copy of the applications had been circulated separately.

In relation to Appendix 1 of the report, the Inverness City Area Manager explained that the underspends from 2021/22 were not underspends in the usual sense but allocated funds that had not yet been drawn down. Members suggested that the headings be amended accordingly in future reports. On the point being raised, it was confirmed that, where funds had yet to be drawn down and project costs had increased, applicants could ask for additional funding and such requests would come back to the Sub-Committee for consideration. In relation to Appendices 2 to 7 of the report, Members suggested that the various financial years be colour-coded in future to differentiate between them.

Discussion took place on the funds committed in previous years, during which information was sought and provided on a number of projects. In relation to the Canal College Project by Keep Scotland Beautiful, it was confirmed that further detail could be provided to Members outwith the meeting.

Following detailed discussion on the merits or otherwise of each application, the Sub-Committee determined the applications for financial assistance as follows:-

Booklet A – Applications under £5,000

Applicant: The Ness Sinfonia

Project/Activity: Development of young timpani and percussion players in Highland

Total amount applied for: £3,550.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

It having been queried whether there was anything that could be done to encourage recruitment from schools to the Sinfonia, it was **AGREED** that the Inverness City Area Manager liaise with High Life Highland, which provided music tuition services, in that regard. It was further **AGREED** that the applicant be encouraged to purchase equipment locally if possible.

Applicant: Highland Indian Association and Heartstone

Project/activity: Cura Guardian

Total amount applied for: £4,900.00

Decision: **DEFERRED**

Members deferred this application to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee to allow the Inverness City Area Manager to request further information as to what was taking place in Inverness and evidence of support from third parties and community benefit.

Applicant: Inverness Outlanders

Project/activity: An audience with Diana Gabaldon on 15 October 2022 at Eden Court Theatre

Total amount applied for: £1,850.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

Applicant: The Libertie Project Limited

Project/activity: Digital inclusion service for people in crisis – provision of refurbished digital devices

Total amount applied for: £5,000.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

During discussion, Members emphasised the importance of obtaining feedback as to the success of the project. In addition, it was **AGREED** that the Inverness City Area Manager liaise with the Head of ICT and Digital Transformation to ascertain whether there was any scope to utilise obsolete Council Chromebooks.

Applicant: Inverness Festival Association

Project/activity: Inverness Music and Performing Arts Festival 2023

Total amount applied for: £4,995.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

Applicant: Chamber Music Tours Scotland

Project/activity: Inverness Piano Recitals 2022/23

Total amount applied for: £4,240.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

Applicant: The Mahler Players

Project/activity: Wager's "Tristan and Isolde" in Inverness Cathedral in December 2022

Total amount applied for: £5,000.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

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

Declaration of Interest: Mrs E McAllister declared an interest in the following application as a member of Partnerships for Wellbeing and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, left the meeting while the application was being discussed.

Applicant: Partnerships for Wellbeing

Project/activity: Wheelchair accessible community transport for Inverness

Total amount applied for: £8,390.00

Decision: **DEFERRED**

Members deferred this application to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee to allow the Inverness City Area Manager to request an appraisal of the organisation's restricted and unrestricted funds as well as information on the number of people that used the service, how they would be affected if it was not available and what the driver training consisted of.

Applicant: Scottish Highlands & Islands and Moray Chinese Association

Project/activity: Fuel and energy poverty relief

Total amount applied for: £9,750.00

Decision: **APPROVED**

Booklet C – Applications over £10,000

Applicant: Free North Church

Project/activity: Platform and sound upgrade

Total amount applied for: £17,250.00

Decision: **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** that the application be **DECLINED**

Members were of the view that the application should be declined on the grounds that there would be insufficient wider benefit to the city of Inverness.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to determine applications for up to and including £10,000 as detailed above;
- ii. **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee, at its meeting on 14 September 2022, that the application for more than £10,000 be determined as detailed above;
- iii. **NOTED** the allocations made from the small grants budget of £75,000 and the larger grants budget of £200,000;
- iv. **AGREED**, in relation to Appendix 1 of the report, that "Underspend from 2021/22" be amended to "Funds allocated but not yet drawn down" in future reports;
- v. **AGREED**, in relation to Appendices 2 to 7 of the report, that the various financial years be colour-coded in future to differentiate between them; and
- vi. **AGREED** that further detail in respect of the Canal College Project by Keep Scotland Beautiful be circulated to Members of the Sub-Committee.

7. Homologation Requests

The following applications had been approved by the Inverness City Area Manager in consultation with the Sub-Committee, subject to homologation at the next available Sub-Committee meeting:-

a. Highland Rugby Football Club

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the approval of a grant of £2,500 to The Highland Rugby Football Club for assistance towards subsidising the tickets for young players to the Club's Centenary Dinner.

b. Inverness Ice Centre

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to make payment of the whole grant of £30,000 to Inverness Ice Centre towards the creation of a festival, cultural and events centre at Inverness Ice Centre.

c. The Kings Golf Club, Inverness

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to extend the grant period of the grant awarded to The Kings Golf Club, Inverness towards a new on-course toilet block. Construction of the toilet block had been delayed due to Planning issues which had now been resolved.

8. Fisherman's Hut

The Sub-Committee was reminded that £8,500 had been approved for additional amenity works at the Fisherman's Hut. Whilst on site the opportunity had been taken to enhance river access and improve path drainage. These works had predominantly been funded by the Council. However, an additional sum of £8,716 had been provided from the Other Properties Budget. The work included steps down to the river and a picturesque bench.

Information having been sought, and provided, on the history of the Fisherman's Hut, the Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to provide an additional sum of £8,716 from the Other Properties Budget.

9. Evaluation Forms

Following discussion on the feedback from Chamber Music Tours Scotland, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the Evaluation Forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects.

In relation to the form submitted by LCC Live Event Services Ltd, it was **AGREED** that the spreadsheet referred to be circulated to Members of the Sub-Committee.

10. Civic Hospitality Requests

There had been circulated Report No. GSC/09/22 dated 4 August 2022 by the Inverness City Area Manager. Details of an application for Civic Hospitality had been circulated separately.

Following detailed discussion on the merits or otherwise of the application, during which the need to be mindful of increasing costs and recurring applications was emphasised, the Sub-Committee determined the request for Civic Hospitality as follows:-

Organisation: Police Scotland
Event: Police Scotland Long Service and Good Conduct Awards Ceremony
Cost: £3,290.00
Decision: **DECLINED**

Members declined the application on the grounds that there were insufficient community links with Inverness.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to determine the application for Civic Hospitality as detailed above;
- ii. **NOTED** that applicants remained responsible for their own costs and may be held liable for the whole costs of the event if it was cancelled due to their own act or omission; and
- iii. **NOTED** that costs of Civic Events continued to increase beyond expected levels and that decisions may need to be taken regarding the prioritisation of events to be supported.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 31 October 2022 in the 2nd Floor Committee Room, Town House, Inverness.

The meeting concluded at 11.40 am.