

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>10c</b>
<b>Report No</b>	<b>CIA/26/23</b>

## **THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** City of Inverness Area Committee

**Date:** 28 August 2023

**Report Title:** Events and Festivals Working Group Update

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place

### **1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The City of Inverness Area Committee (CIAC) agreed a budget of £0.177m for holding community events from the Inverness Common Good Fund (ICGF) on 13 February 2023. This report provides an update and confirmation of the intent that the Events and Festivals Working Group (E&FWG) has in respect of delivery of the remainder of the programme for 2023/24.
- 1.2 The Inverness Highland Games has already been delivered successfully for 2023, however, the budget reduction agreed by CIAC means that E&FWG has taken the decision that it will need to apply charges for entry to the Red-Hot Highland Fling (RHHF), planned for 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. Without application of these charges the remaining events programme would not be deliverable within the reduced allocated budget.
- 1.3 E&FWG has delegated power from CIAC to administer the allocated budget for Community Events which includes power to set the community events programme, however, agreement is required from CIAC to introduce charging in order to deliver the agreed programme of events.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
  - i. Agree to the Events and Festivals Working Group having the delegated power to extend charging for entry to the Red Hot Highland Fling event within the community events programme set by the working group noting the attendant risk to events being delivered within the allocated budget.

### 3. Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – The E&FWG continues to deliver events on budget noting the reduction in budget from £0.303m to £0.177m, agreed at CIAC on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Confirmation of the ability to apply a charging regime will support the events programme to be delivered within the allocated budget.
- 3.2 **Legal** – No Implications
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – It is proposed to introduce charging for the RHHF. A screening for potential impact has been undertaken which has indicated this could have an impact upon individuals on lower incomes and potentially deter some people from attending. Mitigation identified includes efforts to minimise any approach to charging but also for charging to be restricted to the RHHF and for the other events in the programme to be retained as family focused, free events.
- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – No Implications
- 3.5 **Risk** – The Events programme remains a very popular addition to the attractions offered to both locals and tourists. The provision of a charging regime for the RHHF will help sustain this programme as well as reduce financial risk to the ICGF. Charging to ensure delivery of the Community events programme carries risk as if the expected ticket sales do not materialise, the events programme may run at a loss without income from other sources, such as sponsorship.
- 3.6 **Gaelic** – No Implications
- 3.7 **Health and Safety** – Events are delivered using individual event management plans and are granted appropriate licences after scrutiny from the Multi-Agency Safety Advisory Group. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have also advised that SFRS consider that the Civic Bonfire & Fireworks Event makes a significant contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of the Public.

### 4. Background

- 4.1 The Events and Festivals Working Group has delegated power from the City of Inverness Area Committee to administer the budget allocated by the committee by delivering a community events programme. The initial focus of the working group was to deliver a successful Inverness Highland Games, which took place on Saturday 15 July 2023. Over 5,000 people attended, and a summary of the income generated against a background of rising costs is attached at **APPENDIX 1**. The City Area Committee will be presented with a full budget summary of all events on conclusion of the 2023/24 Community Events Programme.
- 4.2 Income was significantly enhanced through sponsorship packages being promoted and sold successfully. This was achieved against a backdrop of economic pressure and the cost-of-living crisis. It is hoped that further sponsorship arrangements will be put in place for future events, such as the RHHF. E&FWG will maximise the impact of any sponsorship in discussion with potential sponsors, so as to support the overall financing of each event.
- 4.3 Since the delivery of the Highland Games, the E&FWG have reviewed the remaining budget and propose that the following community events are delivered: Bonfire and

Fireworks night, Festive Light Switch on and a RHHF. In order to deliver this whole programme, charging for the RHHF would be required.

## 5. Delivering the Community Events Programme

- 5.1 The E&FWG have delegated power to apply the allocated budget for community events. As part of that process, the E&FWG have given careful consideration to preserving accessibility whilst at the same time, being prudent so as to ensure the events programme remains practicably deliverable within the budget allocated by CIAC.
- 5.2 Since 2009/10 the events programmes have been delivered on budget. The budget for 23/24 is a 40% reduction on prior year. Allowing E&FWG to progress a charging model at the Working Group's discretion for the RHHF, will build on the organic development of the community events programme, especially noting the significant progress achieved in attracting sponsorship to the Inverness Highland Games.
- 5.3 In giving consideration to apply a charging model, the E&FWG are very aware of the impact on disadvantaged members of the community. This was highlighted in a screening for potential impact. Consequently, the only event currently being considered for an entry charge, is the forthcoming RHHF. The E&FWG are ensuring that other than the RHHF, planned events include free to enter events for the whole community such as Bonfire and Fireworks night and Festive Lights Switch-on.
- 5.4 In addition, the impact of the reduced budget for community events, which has seen a reduction from £0.303m for 2022/23 to £0.177m for 2023/24, has resulted in the need to rationalise the events programme, resulting in the E&FWG not being in a position to prioritise a Halloween event against the civic bonfire and fireworks, along with events at Hogmanay. In relation to the civic bonfire and fireworks, this is an event which has the support of the Scottish Fire and Rescue service in terms of reducing the numbers of unauthorised bonfires and the risk to the public from setting off their own fireworks displays. The hospitality sector gains from having an event at Hogmanay which, together with the Christmas lights switch, on which makes a welcome return for 2023, brings economic benefit to the city and area. In consequence, Para 5.5 forms the planned Community events programme. Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have reaffirmed their opinion that the Bonfire and Fireworks Event makes a substantive contribution to the health, safety and wellbeing of the general public through reducing the number of private bonfires and fireworks events. **Appendix 2** provides further detail.
- 5.5 As reported at 4.1 and detailed at Appendix 1, the net cost of The Highland Games is £0.030m. Thus, the remaining budget is £0.147m. The remainder of the E&FWG Community events programme for the 2023 Festival Season is as follows:

- Red Hot Highland Fling: £0.097m
- Civic Bonfire and Fireworks £0.036m
- Christmas Lights Switch-On £0.008m

Total £0.141m (against an available budget of £0.144m)

This includes RHHF Ticket income required at £0.050m with maximum expected attendance of 5,000.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The remaining community events programme, consisting of Bonfire Night celebrations, Christmas Lights Switch-On and the RHHF, can be delivered and in accordance with the vision and values agreed by CIAC on 27 May 2021 in **Appendix 3**. The implications including resourcing are detailed at section 3 and throughout this report.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place

Date: 18 August 2023

Author: David Haas, Inverness City Area Manager

## APPENDIX 1

### Inverness Highland Budget Report

As at 16/8/23

\*Please note the below figures may be subject to change on confirmation of final invoices.

COSTS	Nett Cost	VAT	Total
Infrastructure Cost	50336	10067	60403
Security Costings	12086	2417	14503
Staff Costings	12562	0	12562
Entertainment/Entertainers	20464	0	18248
Website/Social Media Management	12511	2502	15013
Totals	107959	14986	122945

INCOME	Nett Sales	VAT	Total
Door Ticket Sales	27017	5403	32420
Sponsorship	9000	1800	10800
Vendor Income	10405	2081	12486
Square on the Day Card Sales	11512	2302	13814
Corporate Hospitality	1875	375	2250
On the Day Cash Sales	14222	2844	17066
Tug of War	33	7	40
Totals	74064	14812	88876

#### Points of note on the above figures

- One off cost for this year's games comes to a total of £ 10,347 (this includes new website, signage etc).
- Increased costs in security were due to the site being secure from Tuesday prior to Monday following the games.
- I forecast that the games will come in around at £30,000 loss once all invoices are received and processed.

## Appendix 2

**From:** Milne, Bruce <[bruce.milne@firescotland.gov.uk](mailto:bruce.milne@firescotland.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 17 August 2023 11:47  
**To:** David Haas (Community Support & Ward Management)  
<[David.Haas@highland.gov.uk](mailto:David.Haas@highland.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Stubbs, Miles <[Miles.Stubbs@firescotland.gov.uk](mailto:Miles.Stubbs@firescotland.gov.uk)>; King, Raymond  
<[Raymond.King@firescotland.gov.uk](mailto:Raymond.King@firescotland.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Community events programme 2023 civic bonfire and fireworks

**CAUTION:** This email was sent from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi David, thanks for the email.

The messaging we generally use in terms of such an event would be that the SFRS would encourage people to attend a properly stewarded and organised Bonfire rather than having their own. The SFRS want people to have an enjoyable Bonfire night without the risk of harm to property or life. Attending an organised and stewarded event is safer for all, and will reduce unnecessary call outs for the SFRS to individual fires.

I would ask however that the details and event plan are shared with SFRS (Raymond) in order that our crews are prepared to assist in the event of any emergency.

Miles is there anything from a Prevention and Protection stance you would like to add.

Kind regards

Bruce

**Bruce Milne | Group Commander | Highland LSO Area | Scottish Fire and Rescue Service |**  
**T: 01463 723026 | M: 07776 543735 |**  
**Email: [bruce.milne@firescotland.gov.uk](mailto:bruce.milne@firescotland.gov.uk)**



### ICGF Events Vision, Values and Objectives

#### Vision

We will spearhead the development of a vibrant, inclusive and iconic programme of Events and Festivals that celebrate the unique identity and culture of our City and Region. We will build on previous successes, striving to utilise expertise and talent from across the Highlands and attract additional sources of external funding to help support economic prosperity and encourage physical and mental wellbeing for the City, its residents and visitors.

Our vision is a point of reference. It will inform future events and working practices and serve as a high-level document we can use to build confidence with our delivery partners and potential funders.

#### Values

**Inclusive:** We will remove barriers to ensure that all activity is inclusive and accessible, enabling participation and engagement with the City of Inverness's most vulnerable residents.

**Ambitious:** We will be ambitious and aspire towards producing an iconic programme of events and festivals that profile the Highland's cultural excellence.

**Collaborative:** We will work collectively to maximise the expertise and capacity of a broad network of Highland cultural organisations and individuals, striving to ensure value for money.

**Dynamic:** We will build upon past success by producing a programme that adapts and responds to changing cultural contexts and to opportunities that arise.

**Responsible:** We will adopt strong and clear governance to help ensure events and festivals will be conducted in a safe, secure and compliant manner that recognises the wider environmental and community impacts.

Our values set out core beliefs that are shared and embraced across the cross-organisational group and our partners. They reflect the behaviours and considerations we promote that will help us achieve our vision.

#### Objectives

To deliver a **dynamic approach to producing events** that is flexible and responsive to opportunities to attract new funding and develop mutually beneficial partnerships.

To develop a programme that is **outcomes-driven** and that embeds processes of monitoring and evaluation that enables evidence-based future decision-making.

To demonstrate **value for money** by supporting activities that have the potential to leverage additional funding and attract earned income and mitigate the need for additional public funding.

We will support events that **value, trust and strengthen individual and organisations** engaged in cultural activities that make a unique contribution to society and economy.

To enable a **year-round programme of activity throughout the seasons** with a co-ordinated approach to marketing and promotion.

To curate an events programme that is rooted in **the characteristics of the City and its people**, acknowledging the City's past whilst looking to its future.

Our objectives outline what we want to achieve through this intervention. They are high level statements of intent that will help shape programme and help inform the expected outcomes from individual events.