

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

Minutes of Meeting of the **Inverness Common Good Fund Sub-Committee** held in Committee Room 3, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Wednesday 6 August 2025 at 11.50 am.

**Present:**

Mr C Ballance  
Mr M Cameron  
Mr A Graham (Chair)  
Dr M Gregson

Ms K MacLean (remote)  
Mr D McDonald  
Mrs M Reid

**In attendance:**

Mr D Haas, Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South  
Mr L Hannah, Community Development Manager  
Ms P Betts, Common Good Fund Officer (remote)  
Mrs H Tolmie, Administrative Assistant, Senior Community Development Manager's Office  
Ms M Murray, Principal Committee Officer

**Mr A Graham in the Chair**

**Business**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr A Christie, Mrs I MacKenzie and Mr D Macpherson.

**2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statements**

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the following Declarations of Interest:-

Item 6: Mr D McDonald

Item 7: Mr A Graham and Mrs M Reid

The Sub-Committee also **NOTED** the following Transparency Statement:-

Item 7: Mrs M Reid

**3. 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.

#### **4. Inverness Common Good Asset Register Review**

The Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, and the Common Good Fund Officer gave a verbal update on the Inverness Common Good Fund (ICGF) Asset Register Review which was currently underway. It was explained that the ICGF Asset Register had first been published in 2020 under the Community Empowerment Act, and it was a requirement that it be reviewed every five years. Details were provided on the purpose and scope of the review, which was targeted for completion by the end of the year. Members' Briefings on specific assets would be provided if required, and the outcome of the review would be reported to the City of Inverness Area Committee.

An update was also provided on the Common Good consultation on the proposed hydrogen development on the former landfill site at the Longman, which had now concluded and would be the subject of a report to the October meeting of the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee would be invited to consider the proposal and make a recommendation to the City of Inverness Area Committee.

Following discussion, during which clarification was sought, and provided, on a number of points, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the updates.

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

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/07/25 by the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South.

During discussion, the following main points were raised:-

- on the point being raised, it was confirmed that officers would liaise with Corporate Communications to ensure the report was the subject of a press release;
- it was necessary to highlight more success stories that showed the impact Common Good funding was having, and it was suggested improving the way the information in the report was presented – for example, an online format with clickable elements and colour – would make it more engaging and reader-friendly. The Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, undertook to look at how the points raised could be addressed;
- it would be helpful to show where there was a difference between the amount applied for and what had been awarded;
- there was a misperception by some as to what the Common Good Fund was, and it would be useful to provide a short explanation in that regard. The Chair highlighted that the report was on the work of the Sub-Committee, not the Common Good Fund itself which was a matter for the City of Inverness Area Committee. However, the point raised could be picked up as part of the budget-setting process for next year; and
- there was £10,000 in the ICGF budget for Press and Public Relations, and it was necessary to ensure this was utilised.

The Sub-Committee otherwise **NOTED** the report prior to it being presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee on 18 August 2025.

## 6. Requests for Civic Hospitality 2025/26

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/07/25 by the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South. A copy of the applications and any supporting documentation had been made available via SharePoint in Booklet A.

Following discussion on the merits or otherwise of each application, during which clarification was sought, and provided, on a number of points, the Sub-Committee determined the applications for civic hospitality as follows:-

**Declaration of Interest: Mr D McDonald declared an interest in the following application as he was related to the applicant and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, left the meeting while the application was being discussed.**

Organisation: Nurses League of Inverness Hospitals  
Event: 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reunion of Nurses League of Inverness Hospitals  
Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Buffet)  
Cost: £2,653.30  
Decision: **APPROVED**

Organisation: Inverness Field Club  
Event: Inverness Field Club  
Venue: Inverness Town House (Civic Buffet Lunch)  
Cost: £2,648  
Decision: **APPROVED**

Organisation: The Camanachd Association  
Event: Shinty Hurling International 2025  
Venue: Bught Park Pavilion – Upper Lounge (Civic Reception), as the Town House was not available on the date requested.  
Cost: £3600  
Decision: **APPROVED** a maximum award of £3,600, subject to the Community Development Manager entering into discussions regarding the possibility of the event sponsor contributing to the cost of the Civic Reception and the event doubling as the official opening of the Pavilion with the Provost of Inverness and Area in attendance.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **NOTED** that applicants remained responsible for their own costs and might be held liable for the whole costs of the event if it was cancelled due to their own act or omission;
- ii. **NOTED** that the cost of civic events continued to increase beyond expected levels and that decisions might need to be taken regarding the prioritisation of events to be supported; and
- iii. **AGREED** to determine the applications listed in Appendix 2 of the report as detailed above.

## 7. Grant Monitoring and Requests for Financial Assistance 2025/26

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/08/25 by the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South. Copies of the applications and supporting documentation had been made available via SharePoint in Booklets B, C, D, E and F.

The Community Development Manager summarised the procedure to be followed, highlighting that the sum of the applications in the Poverty & Inequality category far exceeded the budget available and, as had happened on previous occasions, it might be necessary to reduce the awards on a pro rata basis to ensure fairness.

Thereafter, following discussion on the merits or otherwise of each application, during which clarification was sought and provided on a number of points, the Sub-Committee determined the applications for financial assistance as follows:-

### **Booklet B – Applications £10,000 and under – Poverty & Inequality**

Applicant: Cauldeen Primary School

Project/activity: Lessons at 10 Visit

Amount requested: £8,427.00

Decision: **REFUSED** on the grounds that it was a retrospective application.

**Transparency Statement: Mrs M Reid declared a connection to the following application on the basis that she knew of the applicant through her children's primary school. However, she had no involvement in the project and, having applied the objective test, did not consider that she had an interest to declare.**

Applicant: Baillie Cup

Project/activity: Athletics Event for Primary Schools

Amount requested: £4,000

Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £1,350 (£2,500 minus 46%)

Applicant: Highland School of Skating, Highland Synchronised Ice Skating Teams

Project/activity: Trophy d'Ecosse International Synchro Competition (December 2025) and British Synchronised Championships (February 2026)

Amount requested: £5,000.

Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £1,350 (£2,500 minus 46%)

Applicant: High Life Highland Active Schools – Inverness Royal Academy Cluster

Project/activity: Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis Shinty Group - Equipment Support

Amount requested: £2,730

Decision: **APPROVED** an award of £1,474 (£2,730 minus 46%)

Applicant: The Clay Studio Inverness

Project/activity: Merkinch Community Enterprise and Skills Project

Amount requested: £10,000

Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £4,320 (£8,000 minus 46%) on the condition that the applicant engage with Business Gateway or a similar organisation to obtain support and advice on governance and structure, and that they demonstrate a plan to implement said advice to the satisfaction of the Council.

Applicant: St Andrew's Cathedral

Project/activity: InSpire Project

Amount requested: £5,007

Decision: **APPROVED** an award of £2,704 (£5,007 minus 46%)

Applicant: St Andrew's Cathedral

Project/activity: Works to the Old Boys School

Amount requested: £5,000

Decision: **APPROVED** an award of £2,700 (£5,000 minus 46%)

Applicant: Compass Collective

Project/activity: Next Steps

Amount requested: £9,969

Decision: **APPROVED** an award of £5,383 (£9,969 minus 46%)

Applicant: Inverness Athletic

Project/activity: Purchase of a minibus

Amount requested: £10,000

Decision: **APPROVED** an award of £5,400 (£10,000 minus 46%)

Applicant: Love Inverness

Project/activity: Inverness Street Pastors

Amount requested: £10,000

Decision: **APPROVED** an award of £5,400 (£10,000 minus 46%) subject to clarification being sought regarding the project cost in respect of the engagement/support from Ascension Trust Scotland.

It was **AGREED** that powers be delegated to officers to reduce the award if necessary, depending on the outcome of enquiries.

Applicant: Inverness Blitz

Project/activity: Wear with Pride

Amount requested: £8,500

Decision: **APPROVED** an award of £4,590 (£8,500 minus 46%).

Applicant: The Archie Foundation

Project/activity: Emergency Support Programme

Amount requested: £8,000

Decision: **APPROVED** an award of £4,320 (£8,000 minus 46%)

It was also **AGREED** that the Community Development Manager would work with the applicant to develop a referral pathway to the Dr Forbes Trust.

Applicant: Red Chair Highland CIC

Project/activity: Connectivity for digital inclusion – Inverness

Amount requested: £4,720

Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £1,091 (£2020 minus 46%)

**In terms of Standing Order 8, the Chair agreed to accept the following urgent additional application due to the timescale of the project and there not being another meeting of the Sub-Committee until 27 October 2025.**

**Declarations of Interest:** The undernoted Members declared an interest in the following application and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, left the meeting while the application was being discussed:-

**Mr A Graham as a long-standing season ticket holder with Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club**

**Mrs M Reid as a former employee of Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club**

**Mr C Ballance took the Chair for the following application.**

Applicant: Inverness Caledonian Thistle Community Development

Project/activity: ICT Community HUB Pitch Programme

Amount requested: £8,748

Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £2,362 (£4,374 minus 46%)

### **Booklet C – Applications £10,000 and under – Other**

Applicant: Inverness Camera Club on behalf of Highland Challenge Clubs

Project/activity: The Highland Challenge (Photographic competition for camera clubs in the Highlands and Islands)

Amount requested: £400

Decision: **APPROVED**

Applicant: The Shielling Collective CIC

Project/activity: The Shielling Revival Initiative

Amount requested: £9,750

Decision: **REFUSED** on the grounds of insufficient community benefit.

Applicant: Centre for Living Sustainability (CLS) at UHI Inverness

Project/activity: Invernessiana: Celebrating the life and work of Charles Fraser-Mackintosh

Amount requested: £4,700

Decision: **APPROVED** a partial award of £2,350.

Applicant: Delish Ness Catering and Events

Project/activity: Food truck concession at Inverness Castle Experience

Amount requested: £9,000

Decision: **REFUSED** on the grounds that it was a commercial operation.

**Declaration of Interest:** Mr A Graham declared an interest in the following application due to his long-standing association with The Old High and, in accordance with paragraph 5.6 of the revised Code of Conduct, left the meeting while the application was being discussed.

**Mr C Ballance took the Chair for the following application.**

Applicant: The Old High Inverness (SCIO)

Project/activity: The Old High "Meantime Uses"

Amount requested: £2,000

Decision: **REFUSED** on the grounds of insufficient justification for the provision of support from the Common Good Fund.

At this stage, it was highlighted that, taking into account the grants awarded today, there was £41,950 remaining in the Other Grants budget. Given that the Poverty and Inequality budget had been oversubscribed and had now been fully allocated, it was suggested it be recommended to the City of Inverness Area Committee that £30,000 of the funds remaining in the Other Grants budget be vired to the Poverty and Inequality budget to allow some future Poverty and Inequality applications to be considered.

#### **Booklet D – Conference Funding**

Applicant: Generations Working Together  
Project/activity: Scottish Intergenerational Conference and Excellence Awards 2025  
Amount requested: £1,688  
Decision: **APPROVED**

Applicant: The Camanachd Association  
Project/activity: The Tulloch Homes Camanachd Cup Final 2025 and Shinty – Hurling International 2025  
Amount requested: £7,000  
Decision: **APPROVED**

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

Applicant: Inverness BID Ltd  
Project/activity: Operation Respect Youth Action Project – September Springboard  
Amount requested: £4,970  
Decision: **APPROVED**

Applicant: Inverness BID Ltd  
Project/activity: Best Foot Forward Project  
Amount requested: £17,970  
Decision: **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** that the application be **APPROVED** from the Community Regeneration Fund.

On the point being raised, it was further **AGREED** that the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, would consult with Inverness BID on the cost implications of expanding the Smart Scape element of the project to include cleaning the large Council bins in the city centre. If the costings were received in time, an update could be provided at the City of Inverness Area Committee on 18 August 2025.

Applicant: Visit Inverness Loch Ness  
Project/activity: Business Tourism  
Amount requested: £20,000  
Decision: **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** that the application be **APPROVED**.

It was further **AGREED** that the financial accounts relating to the application be circulated to Members of the Sub-Committee.

#### **Booklet F – City Promotions**

Applicant: Highland Hospice

Project/activity: Falcon Square Civic Christmas Tree/Light up the Highlands  
Amount requested: £2,500  
Decision: **APPROVED** on a one-off basis.

The Sub-Committee:-

- i. **AGREED** to determine the applications for up to and including £10,000 as detailed above, the Poverty & Inequality awards having been reduced by 46% to ensure fairness given the budget available;
- ii. **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee, at its meeting on 18 August 2025, that the applications for over £10,000 be determined as detailed above; and
- iii. **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee, at its meeting on 18 August 2025, that £30,000 of the funds remaining in the Other Grants budget be vired to the Poverty and Inequality budget to allow some future Poverty and Inequality applications to be considered.

**In terms of Standing Order 8, the Chair agreed to accept the following urgent additional item of business as it related to additional expenditure incurred as a result of Storm Floris on Monday 4 August 2025.**

#### **7a. Storm Floris - Floral Basket Mitigation**

The Senior Community Development Manager explained that he had approved expenditure in the sum of £1500 from the City Promotions budget for additional work, as a result of Storm Floris, to save the floral baskets in exposed locations in the city centre and minimise any risk of injury due to baskets coming off their brackets. With the help of Inverness BID and the contractor, approximately 40 baskets at Ness Bridge, Bridge Street, High Street and the Town House had been removed and returned after the storm had passed.

The Committee **NOTED** the position.

#### **8. Town Twinning Augsburg Anniversary Year Activities 2026**

There had been circulated Report No. ICGF/09/25 by the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South.

During discussion, information was sought, and provided, on what sports would be involved in the proposed Inverness/Augsburg Sporting Alliance Exchange. It was confirmed that the draft programme could be shared with Members, and suggested that sports clubs seeking support to send representatives to Augsburg should contact the Senior Community Development Manager and Community Development Manager directly.

In addition, it was requested that information be provided to the City of Inverness Area Committee on how much money had been drawn down from Inverness Common Good Fund Reserves in recent years, and the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, undertook to discuss the matter with the Leader of Inverness and Area.

The Sub-Committee **AGREED TO RECOMMEND** to the City of Inverness Area Committee, at its meeting on 18 August, that £26,350.00 be drawn from Inverness Common Good Fund Reserves to fund the 2026 Town Twinning Augsburg Anniversary Year Activities.

## **9. Inverness Town House Update**

The Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, gave a verbal update on the plans for making best use of the early opportunities for commercial activity at Inverness Town House without prejudice to its main function as a civic space for the City and Area.

Clarification having been sought, and provided, on a number of points, the Sub-Committee **NOTED** the update.

## **10. Homologation and Noting Requests**

The following applications had been approved by the Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, in consultation with the Sub-Committee, subject to homologation or noting at the next available Sub-Committee Meeting:-

### **a. Inverness BID – Operation Respect Pilot**

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to award a grant of £3,756.00 from the City Promotions budget towards an Operation Respect 6-week pilot in the City Centre.

### **b. St Valery-en-Caux Town Twinning Visit**

The Senior Community Development Manager, Inverness and South, in consultation with the Sub-Committee, had previously approved a grant of £3,000.00 from the Civic Contingency Fund towards extending an invitation to a delegation from St Valery-en-Caux to attend the Highland Games in July. This had followed a very successful trip to St Valery by the Provost to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VE Day. However, the visit had not taken place.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the position.

### **c. Civic Hospitality Requests**

The Sub-Committee **AGREED** to homologate the decision to approve the following civic hospitality requests:-

- i. Highland Senior Citizens Network 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - £2,400.00
- ii. Visit of the Moderator of the General Assembly - £4,843.00

### **d. Recurring Civic Hospitality Request**

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the approval of the following event on the Recurring List:-

- i. Poppyscotland 2025 - £2,205.00

## 11. Evaluation Forms

Evaluation Forms submitted by applicants on completion of their projects had been made available via SharePoint in Booklet G.

During discussion, Members welcomed the encouraging Evaluation Forms and, as discussed earlier, it was confirmed that officers would work with the Chair and Corporate Communications with a view to publicising good news stories about the projects the Inverness Common Good Fund had supported.

The Sub-Committee otherwise **NOTED** the Evaluation Forms.

## 12. Civic Lighting Requests

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the following Civic Lighting requests for the period 30 April to 1 August 2025:-

### Ness Bridge

- Blood Cancer Awareness Day
- VE Day
- Community Walk for Mental Health Awareness Week 2025
- Shine a Light on World Nerve Tumours Awareness Day
- Lyme Disease Awareness Month
- Highland Pride
- Alzheimer's Scotland Awareness Week
- Srebrenica Memorial Day 30th Anniversary

## 13. Free Hall Lets

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** there had been no free hall lets during the period 30 April to 1 August 2025.

## 14. Date of Next Meeting

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** that the next meeting would take place on Monday 27 October 2025 at 9.30 am.

The meeting concluded at 4.40 pm.