The Highland Council

Minutes of Meeting of the **City of Inverness Area Committee** held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Monday 17 August 2026 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Mr C Ballance
Mr B Boyd (am only)
Mr I Brown
Mr M Cameron
Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair
Mr A Christie
Ms H Crawford
Mr D Fraser
Mr K Gowans
Mr A Graham (except item 1-3)
Mr D Gregg
Dr M Gregson
Mrs J Hendry
Ms E Knox (remote)
Mrs I MacKenzie
Mr R MacKintosh
Mr A MacKintosh
Ms K MacLean (remote)
Mr D Macpherson
Mr D MacDonald
Mrs M Reid
Mrs T Robertson

Non-Members also present:

Mr M Green

In attendance:

Mr D Haas, Senior Community Development Manager (Inverness and South)
Mr S Grant, Roads Operation Manager
Mr G Ralph, Repairs Manager, Asset Strategy
Ms M Maguire, Principal Planner
Mr M Greig, Community Development Manager
Mr J MacLean, Bereavement Services Manager
Miss J MacLennan, Joint Democratic Services Manager
Ms K Arnott, Committee Officer

Also in attendance:

Chief Superintendent C Still, Police Scotland

An asterisk in the margin denotes a recommendation to the Council. All decisions with no marking in the margin are delegated to the Committee.

Mr I Brown in the Chair

Business

Preliminaries

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, Mr Brown referred to the MBE awarded to Mr Roddy Wood in the King's Birthday Honours for services to youth, veterans and communities in the Highlands.

Also, he informed Members of the intention to hold three online Inverness Common Good Fund Strategy Development workshops provisionally set for 7, 14 and 18 September.

1. Calling of the Roll and Apologies for Absence

Gairm a' Chlàir agus Leisgeulan

An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Mr A Sinclair.

2. Declarations of Interest/Transparency Statement
Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt/ Aithris Fhollaiseachd

The Committee **NOTED** the following Transparency Statements:-

Item 7 – Mr M Cameron and Mr D Macpherson
Item 9 and 11 - Mr A Christie

3. Recess Powers
Cumhachdan Fosaidh

The Committee **NOTED** that the Recess Powers granted by the Council at its meeting on 25 June 2026 had not been exercised in relation to the business of this Committee.

4. Police Scotland – Area Performance Report
Poileas Alba – Aithisg Coileanaidh Sgìreil

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/32/26 by the Area Commander (Inverness Area Command).

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the hard work and support of Police Scotland's Community Beats team in the City was recognised and, in particular, their collaboration with the housing team;
- some people still did not realise that they could report incidents online to the Police and there should be a communication exercise to get this message across. It was recognised that the Police 101 telephone number could be a challenge for some people to use and efforts had been made to communicate various ways to contact the Police. On the Police Scotland website, under Highlands and Islands, there was a new e-mail address for the Police community team which could be used for reporting non urgent matters;
- reference was made to an abandoned motor vehicle on the A96, which was receiving a lot of complaints from the public and required to be moved. It was taxed and had an MOT so, consequently, was a Police matter. An undertaking was given to investigate this matter;
- in relation to the increase in road traffic offences, it was good to see the Police Scotland's additional work in targeting this area, which had resulted in more convictions. A request was made for a detailed breakdown of road traffic offences. In particular, thanks were extended to officers focusing on speeding traffic on the B9006;
- assurance was sought that Police Scotland were adequately resourcing the Police service in Highland. They were providing a valuable service to the community and had to implement national initiatives and deal with more incursions of organised crime from out with the area. Inverness was the headquarters not just for local policing but for a number of national divisions and all these resources could be called upon in response to critical incidents;

- particular concern was the rise in assaults on Police officers and emergency response officers from other public sector partners. Members were informed that officers undertook two days of operational safety training a year. There was a rise in individuals who were willing to use violence not just against Police officers but also those working in other occupations e.g. NHS and Retail. People going to work deserved to be safe and should not be the victim of assault or abuse and there was a need for a better understanding why this was happening;
- with three murders in Inverness area in 2026, it was a stark reality of how society was changing in this area;
- a focus on prevention of shoplifting was seeing improvements;
- there had been a continued reduction in missing persons cases and this had been due to much more proactive work with care providers, assessment of risk, and proactive work by the Police missing persons co-ordinator;
- a year-to-date variation in the detection rate for crimes was requested for the next report. Further clarification would be provided on the drink/drug detection rate;
- reference was made to the City of Inverness retailer initiative being launched by Police Scotland. Retail Crime taskforce issued bulletins to their members highlighting ongoing trends and individuals who were active. This information was imperative in preventing and taking action against perpetrators of retail crime. Also, it would be highlighted to the Police interventions and preventions team the importance of interacting with rural retailers with support to prevent retail crime;
- Police monthly briefings to Members were acknowledged and provided very valuable information and all Members were encouraged to attend them. Also, attendance by the Police at Community Council meetings was encouraged and officers did attend when there were specific concerns to be addressed. The Inverness Community Council Forum had served well as an opportunity for the Police to attend these meetings;
- in relation to recent wildfires in Highland, this had significant resource demands not just for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service but also for the Police and it was queried if the Police could expect extra finance from the Scottish Government to cover these additional costs;
- it was confirmed that the Police interventions and preventions team did support retailers in the design of their premises to prevent shoplifting; and
- guidance was to be updated for community speed watch in Scotland and it was requested that this be shared as a number of rural communities would be keen to be involved in this initiative.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

i. progress made against the objectives set within the Highland Local Policing Plan 2023–2026 Year 1 attached as Annex A to the report, for the period covering 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2026;
ii. the change in format necessitated by a reduction in back-office capacity to prepare additional area committee reports; and
iii. the following information sought by Members:-
    - a detailed breakdown of road traffic offences;
    - a year to date variation in the detection rate for crimes; and
    - clarification on the drink/drug detection rate.

5. Winter Service Plan 2026-27
Plana Seirbheis a' Gheamhraidh 2026-27

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/33/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the work the winter maintenance team carried out was recognised and much appreciated by Members and communities. In terms of complaints received, the public needed to understand that it was the same team gritting roads and filling grit bins, so they could not be everywhere at once. Therefore the public were asked to be patient and support the team;
- a view was expressed that while it was appreciated that patience was essential with winter maintenance, patience wore thin when, for example, care at home staff could not attend homes due to roads not been gritted. There were times that the Council had not acted quickly enough to address gritting concerns. Further, it was suggested that there be a report on the funding criteria for winter maintenance to determine whether the service was adequately funded;
- the winter maintenance route maps detailed in the report required updating to reflect road closures and new roads around housing developments. In particular, it was requested that the Map be altered to include Macdiarmid's Road, Ardersier which was part of the school route and also to reflect the bus routes in Lochardil, Crown, Hilton, Milton and Drakies that had changed since the Map was last updated. Route maps were currently under review which would include cross boundary working and a review of optimisation of routes;
- in relation to grit bins, the policy was to prioritise bins where there was a gradient, and there was also a need to look at prioritising paths which were used extensively. If too many bins were issued the team would not be able to get round them all to fill them in winter conditions. When there were prolonged periods of snow/ice then the team did try to be innovative in ways to provide grit to communities;
- in relation to the gully emptying machine, this was effective to prevent the build up of water, which would freeze in winter conditions. A second gully emptying machine was due to be in service soon and would provide additional resource for more frequent emptying of gulleys;
- the A831 to Cannich was a priority route but the adjacent road to Tomich was not, albeit on a school route. An undertaking was given to look at this as part of the review of routes;
- the lease of snowploughs by the Council made good economic sense, given that these vehicles would only be used for a few months over the winter period. However, there was a risk if the company went out of business or the gritters had not been repaired in time when they were needed. It was queried what risk assessment for leasing gritters had been carried out. These companies were recognised companies used by other Councils and Bear Scotland and they would require to provide replacement vehicles should a gritter break down. There would also be a plan in place to cover a company going out of business;
- Local Members and Community Councils should be informed when roads in new housing developments were adopted as house builders would remove their grit bins when roads were adopted. This would be discussed with the Roads management team and the sooner roads were adopted the sooner the Council

could provide winter maintenance for the road. Further, providing plastic scoops in grit bins would be considered;

- the Council collaborated with farmers and contractors in relation to the gritting of roads. Bear Scotland were contracted by the Scottish Government and had their own road network to provide winter maintenance but the Roads team were open to collaborating with them on winter maintenance service provision;
- it was suggested that additional operators be trained so there was more of them having category 2 licences to drive a gritter when needed;
- performance statistics on the winter maintenance plan would be made available in a future report;
- as winter approached there was a concern that pavement surfaces, such as in Carse Road, King Street, Grant Street and parts of Crown area, needed to improve as they could be quite hazardous, particularly for elderly people. Members were informed that there was a programme of footpath maintenance;
- a pipe leading from a drain in the High Street, Ardersier needed fixed with the repair long overdue. A permanent solution to this issue was being looked into;
- regular communication with the public in winter conditions was highlighted and that there should be more collaboration with the NHS and the Highland Senior Citizens Network Group on how we could all look after each other better in winter conditions. There was a programme of communication with communities by the Corporate Communications team. Also, through the Council's Emergency Planning team, it would be ensured that support was available to build up communities own resilience in winter conditions. and
- overgrown hedges/trees blocking drains was highlighted and the Roads team would check what could be done to encourage landowners/home owners to maintain hedges etc.

The Committee **APPROVED** the Winter Service Plan for 2026/27, subject to the points to be addressed raised at the meeting.

6. Housing Performance Report 1 April 2026-30 June 2026
Plana Seirbheis a' Gheamhraidh 2026-27

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/34/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

In relation to the capital programme, it was explained that some of the capital outputs have been wrongly reported and updated figures would be circulated after the meeting. Attention was drawn to some of the specific amendments in section 8 of the report.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- while acknowledging that traffic issues on the A96 could have impacted the emergency repairs figures for Culloden and Ardersier, concern was expressed that the average re-let time for Culloden and Ardersier was 13 days longer than the overall average. It was explained this could be the result of one or a small number of properties taking a significant amount of time to re-let, thus affecting the average figures. In this regard, it was requested that consideration be given to the compilation and presentation of housing performance statistics to provide a more accurate overall performance view, and to minimise the impact of

outliers on average figures. It would be helpful if a housing performance dashboard with close to real-time figures was available for Members;
- it was requested that in future a Housing Officer be present in person to speak to the report; and
- it was queried whether the 696 properties in Inverness West included recently completed mid-market rent properties. This would be clarified outwith the meeting.

The Committee **NOTED** the information provided on housing performance in the period 1 April 2026-30 June 2026 and ***AGREED:***

i. the updated report be circulated to the Committee;
ii. the Housing service be asked to investigate whether performance information could be presented to provide a more accurate overall picture of the current situation;
iii. information be provided to Members outwith the meeting on whether the performance report figures included the mid-market rent properties in Inverness West, and
iv. the Housing service be asked to ensure an officer was present in person for future meetings.

7. Short Term Let Control Area – Post Consultation Update
Sgìre Smachd Màil Gheàrr-ùine – Cunntas às Ùr às Dèidh Co-chomhairleachaidh

Mr M Cameron and Mr D Macpherson made Transparency Statements in respect of this item as Mr Cameron was named on an existing short term let license in the rural Inverness area and Mr Macpherson had a close family member who owned a short term let. However, having applied the objective test, they reviewed their position in relation to the item and any personal connection, they did not consider that they had an interest to declare.

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/35/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- in terms of the practical effects of a Short Term Let Control (STLC) Area, it did not retrospectively change planning status. Therefore, if you were an existing operator and you did not need planning permission, the introduction of a control area would not change this. If a STLC area was introduced a future change of use would require planning permission. Information on the separate Licensing regime was also provided;
- it was queried what the additional costs in administrative expenses was expected, both for the Council and owners of Short Term Lets (STL). A detailed resourcing analysis had not yet been undertaken as not all Local Committees had yet considered whether to recommend a STLC area. The resourcing information would be submitted to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee who would have the final decision to submit a STLC area to Scottish Ministers. For operators who were thinking of operating a STL in future, they would have to apply for planning permission and pay a one off planning application fee for a change in use. Also, licensing would require to be renewed every 3 years and there would be a charge for this;

- in relation to what measurable outcomes were anticipated e.g. affordability of homes, more accommodation for rent, it was clarified that the proposal's intention was to manage change of use by planning scrutiny and, as could be seen from Badenoch and Strathspey who had already introduced a STLC area, changes of use were being managed and there was not the same proportion of new build house completions or house sales subsequently becoming STLs;
- it was queried how the proposal fitted in with the Council's empty homes work to address housing pressures. It was advised that the planning system did encourage the bringing back empty homes into positive use;
- it was queried if potential displacement had been considered to other Wards not under a STLC designation but this was not known at this stage;
- it was suggested that it should be monitored if a STLC area had improved housing provision. In this respect, an additional recommendation was proposed as follows:-" Agree to recommend to Economy and Infrastructure Committee that, should a Short Term Let Control Area be designated, a review report subject to resources be presented to the CIA Members within two years of implementation, setting out planning application outcomes, appeal outcomes, evidence of any displacement effects, measurable housing impacts, and the extent to which the Control Area has met its stated objectives should any decision to submit a proposal for designation to Scottish Ministers";
- in relation to the impact assessment contained in the report, it was suggested that an STLC area would bring greater benefit for elderly and disabled people with stability to live in an area that was not surrounded by STLs. Also, there would be a positive long term benefit for residents if they lived in an area where STLs did not outnumber them. An undertaking was giving to consider this for the report to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee;
- a view was expressed that the STLC area should progress to the next stage, noting comments in the consultation such as too many properties being converted into STLs, rising house prices linked to STLs and the need for planning controls due to bad experiences with STLs;
- in relation to the Inverness-shire rural part of the consultation, concern was expressed regarding the low response rate to it. The response rate for the wider consultation was 608 responses and this was a good response rate;
- a view was expressed that there was limited evidence of success from the STLC area in Badenoch and Strathspey. Also, while there were benefits of a STLC area, there was no economic impact assessment of an STLC area on tourism and rural economy. However, a STLC area was a planning designation and there was no requirement to do one in terms of the regulations;
- information was provided in relation to existing new build properties that were changed to STLs within rural Inverness-shire and the certificate of lawful use process for planning purposes;
- the drift towards new build houses being bought and turned into STLs was not a healthy situation. There was a housing demand and the desire to have a thriving tourist sector and allowing the free housing market to resolve the problem was not supported. Therefore, management of the process was necessary and a STLC area would introduce planning management and scrutiny where it was actually needed;
- a Members workshop would be held to discuss relevant planning policy and how it was used within the planning application process; and
- the key point was the availability of residential housing and it was clear from responses to the survey that the majority were in favour of a STLC area.

Thereafter, Mr I Brown, seconded by Mr A Christie, **MOVED** that the recommendations in the report be approved.

As an **AMENDMENT**, Mrs I MacKenzie, seconded by Ms H Crawford, moved the following addition:-

(v) Agree to recommend to the Economy and Infrastructure Committee that, should a Short Term Let Control Area be designated, a review report, subject to resources, be presented to the City of Inverness Area Committee Members within two years of implementation, setting out planning application outcomes, appeal outcomes, evidence of any displacement effects, measurable housing impacts and the extent to which the Control Area had met its stated objectives, should any decision to submit a proposal for designation to Scottish Ministers.

On a vote being taken, the **MOTION** received 12 votes and the **AMENDMENT** received 9 votes, with no abstentions, and the **MOTION** was therefore carried, the votes having been cast as follows:-

For the Motion:
Mr C Ballance, Mr I Brown, Mr M Cameron, Mrs G Campbell-Sinclair, Mr D Fraser, Mr K Gowans, Mrs J Hendry, Ms E Knox, Mr R MacKintosh, Mr A MacKintosh, Ms K MacLean, Mrs M Reid.

For the Amendment:
Mr A Christie, Ms H Crawford, Mr D Gregg, Dr M Gregson, Mrs I Mackenzie, Mr D Macpherson, Mr D McDonald, Mrs T Robertson, Mr A Graham.

Decision

The Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the consultation feedback and the potential implications that a Short Term Let (STL) Control Area would have on communities within the City of Inverness as set out in Appendix 3 and summarised in Section 8, and 10 of the report;
ii. **NOTED** the consultation feedback and the potential implications that a STL Control Area will have on communities within rural Inverness-shire as set out in Appendix 4 and summarised in Section 9 and 10 of the report;
iii. **AGREED** to recommend to Economy and Infrastructure Committee that the proposed City of Inverness Short Term Let Control Area be progressed, should any decision to submit a proposal for designation to Scottish Ministers be taken; and
iv. **AGREED** to recommend to Economy and Infrastructure Committee that rural Inverness-shire be included within the proposed Highland Rural Short Term Let Control Area, should any decision to submit a proposal for designation to Scottish Ministers be taken.

8. Community Regeneration Fund: Allocation Update and Governance
Maoin Ath-bheothachadh Coimhearsnachd: Cunntas air Riarachadh is Stiùireadh

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/36/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

The Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the Community Regeneration Fund allocation for City of Inverness Area for 2026/27; and
ii. **AGREED** to utilise the existing delegated powers granted to Inverness Common Good Fund Sub Committee (ICGFSC) for the sifting of Expressions of Interest and assessment of applications and to make recommendations to City of Inverness Area Committee on final funding awards.

9. Inverness Common Good Fund
Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis

Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as a Non-Executive Director on Inverness BID. However, having applied the objective test, reviewed his position in relation to the item and any personal connection, he did not consider that he had an interest to declare.

a. Financial Monitoring Q4 2025/26 and Q1 Financial Monitoring 2026/27
Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail - Cairteal 4 2025/26 agus Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail Cairteal 1 2026/27

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/37/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- clarification was sought, and provided, in terms of section 7.5 of the report;
- in terms of section 5.3.1 of the report, the Town House New Tenants income should read £0.067m; and
- reference was made to publicity surrounding the Inverness International Blues Festival which suggested the event had incurred losses of £200k to £300k. It was asked where this would be reflected and clarification was sought on the position regarding the reported deficit. In response, it was confirmed that the Inverness International Blues Festival had been delivered within the budget allocated for Events and Festivals and within the budget forecast for the event. Further detailed reports on the festival would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee. It was incorrect to suggest that the festival had resulted in a loss to the Inverness Common Good Fund.

The Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the outturn financial monitoring report as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report for the year ended 31 March 2026;
ii. **NOTED** the financial monitoring report to 31 May 2026 as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report;
iii. **AGREED** the allocation of a maximum of £0.015m towards an updated business case for the Victorian Market, as outlined in section 9 of the report; and

iv. **AGREED** the proposals for progressing a Strategy and Financial Strategy for the Inverness Common Good Fund.

b. Inverness Common Good Fund – Victorian Market Financial Monitoring 2026/27 Quarter 1
Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis – Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail na Margaidh Bhictòrianaich 2026/27 Ràith 1

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/38/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- the increased transparency provided by the report was welcomed. However it was questioned whether the costs associated with the provision of the city centre public toilets should be attributed to the Victorian Market;
- forthcoming workshops were welcomed, particularly the opportunity to examine profitability in more detail;
- in terms of table 5.5 within the report, attention had been drawn to the service charge and maintenance costs and it was expressed that this did not represent great value for money. Further information was sought, and provided, in this regard; and
- in response to a question regarding the deficit forecast of £184k, it was hoped that this would reduce further in next year's budget.

The Committee **NOTED**:-

i. the new report format set out within Appendix 1 of the report;
ii. the spend breakdown set out within Appendix 1 of the report; and
iii. the intention to develop this new report format for the Victorian Market through 2026/27 as detailed at section 8 of the report.

c. Inverness Common Good Fund – Inverness Town House Financial Monitoring 2026/27 Quarter 1
Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis – Sgrùdadh Ionmhasail Taigh Baile Inbhir Nis 2026/27 Ràith 1

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/39/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- Members welcomed the transparency of the report and hoped that this would continue to develop;
- clarification was sought, and provided, in terms of the anticipated rent income;
- research into other civic town halls in Scotland showed that there was a reliance on local authority subsidies and/or government grant funding to operate, with some having merged functions with museums or cultural centres. Initiatives at the Inverness Town House, such as the introduction of the in-house bar, development of additional civic event space and greater capacity in the main hall offered an ongoing saving and there was considerable scope to develop commercial opportunities further;

- Members clarified that the catering provided at the Town House was for civic receptions and commercial bookings, rather than for the provision of meals to Councillors. However, Members of this Committee were invited to attend appropriate Civic events; and
- it was asked whether it would be possible to carry out a commercial viability study similar to that carried out for the Victorian Market, and a response was provided.

The Committee:-

i. **APPROVED** the new report format set out within Appendix 1 of the report;
ii. **NOTED** the spend breakdown set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
iii. **NOTED** the changes to the budget lines in Section 6.1 of the report which would be shown within the Revenue Monitoring Statement; and
iv. **NOTED** the intention to develop this new report format for the Town House through 2026/27 as detailed at section 8.1 of the report.

d. Inverness Common Good Fund Sub Committee Annual Report 2025/2026
Aithisg Bhliadhnail Maoin Math Coitcheann Inbhir Nis 2025/2026

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/40/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive - Place.

The Committee **NOTED** the work of the ICGFSC as detailed within the report.

e. Grants Over £10,000 Report
Aithisg Thabhartasan Thar £10,000

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/41/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive – Place.

The Committee:

i. **AGREED** to determine the applications for funding detailed in Appendices 2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9 of the report as follows:-

a) Isobel Fraser Home – **APPROVED £15,800** from the Poverty and Inequality Budget for a Garden Room;
b) Inverness Foodstuff – **APPROVED £11,850** from the Poverty and Inequality Budget for the Sanctuary Project;
c) St Columba Church of Scotland, Inverness – **APPROVED £15,800** from the Poverty and Inequality Budget for St Columba Community Rooms for South Inverness;
d) 3rd Inverness (Crown) Scout Group – **APPROVED £10,073** from the Poverty and Inequality Budget towards the refurbishment of the Scout Hall;
e) New Start Highland – **APPROVED £30,000** from Winter Payments Budget with the proviso that any shortfall could be drawn from the Poverty and Inequality Budget for the New Start Highland Foodbank;
f) Inverness BID – **APPROVED £10,005** from the City Destinations Projects Budget for Inverness City Partnership (In Action) Street Scene (Autumn 2026 and Spring 2027);
g) Inverness BID:-

i. **DECLINED** the request in respect of Activity 1: Northern Meeting Park WC Eight-Week Pilot, as per section 5.4 of the report;
ii. **DEFERRED** the request in respect of Activity 2: Public Safety and Defibrillator Provision, as per section 5.4 of the report; and
iii. **APPROVED £1,600** in respect of Activity 3: Public Noticeboards and Civic Information;

h) Inverness Fringe Festival – **AGREED** that:-
i. 90% of the agreed funding be released; and
ii. the condition that the project receive the Creative Scotland funding that had been applied for be removed.

ii. **NOTED** the detailed budget breakdown for the Inverness Fringe Festival;
iii. **AGREED** the recommendation in section 5.5 of the report; and
iv. **AGREED** to close the Poverty and Inequality Grants along with the Other Grants budget for further applications for the remainder of financial year 26/27.

10. Inverness Floral Clock Update
Cunntas às Ùr air Cloc Flùranach Inbhir Nis

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/42/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive - People.

In discussion, it was proposed that Members agree to procure and install the replacement clock mechanism using Community Regeneration Funding of £35,000 previously agreed for this purpose. In addition, the ICGF Sub Committee be asked to consider all the options set out in the report and bring recommendations with full annual costings back to the Committee to allow Members to make an informed decision.

An alternative view was expressed that Members agree Option 1 to have no clock installed and to cease planting on Castle Hill with current plant spaces being grassed over. This would provide for an affordable and practical way forward, protect the public purse, complement the large-scale investment in the Inverness Castle Experience and avoid creating a long-term financial commitment for the future.

Further comments included that the cost of the feasibility study be provided, the need for the ICGF Sub Committee to consider issues around the land ownership and that the Council owned the land at Castle Hill and already paid for the floral displays in this location.

The Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the progress to date; and
ii. **NOTED** the options presented and **AGREED** to;-
(a) procure and install the replacement clock mechanism using Community Regeneration Funding of £35,000 previously agreed for this purpose;
(b) the ICGF Sub Committee be asked to consider all the presentational options for the Clock set out in the report and bring recommendations with full annual costings back to the Committee to allow Members to make an informed decision.

11. Burial Grounds – Commutation Fund
Cladhan – Maoin Co-iomlaid

Mr A Christie made a Transparency Statement in respect of this item in his capacity as a Non-Executive Director on Inverness BID. However, having applied the objective test, reviewed his position in relation to the item and any personal connection, he did not consider that he had an interest to declare.

There had been circulated Report No. CIA/43/26 by the Assistant Chief Executive - People.

In discussion, Members raised the following issues:-

- further clarification was sought, and provided, that a report to the Communities and Place Committee on 13 August 2026 had provided an update on the burial ground extension programme and officers could provide specific details if required;
- an explanation was sought, and provided, on the rationale for gates being unlocked overnight at some cemeteries in response to concerns around issues of poor behaviour and risk of wildfires;
- in terms of the Inverness City Centre Burial Ground Feasibility Study, further clarity was provided on how green space in burial grounds could be utilised and enhanced and that the findings of the Study and recommended options would be presented to a future Committee for consideration; and
- the Burials Team were commended on the excellent work carried out at cemeteries in the area and on that to be undertaken, specific reference being made Tomnahurich Cemetery which was located on a key gateway to the City.

The Committee:-

i. **NOTED** the current position of the Inverness Burial Ground Commutation Fund;
ii. **APPROVED** a feasibility study for works to the Inverness City Centre Burial Ground's in partnership with Inverness City Heritage Trust at a cost of up to £20,000; and
iii. **APPROVED** works to repair and improve the fence at Tomnahurich Cemetery at a cost of up to £50,000.

12. Membership of Committees

The Committee **AGREED** to appoint Mr M Cameron and Mr A MacKintosh to the Events and Festivals Working Group

13. Minutes
Geàrr-chunntas

The following Minutes were circulated:-

i. **NOTED** City of Inverness Area Committee held on 18 May 2026;
ii. **APPROVED** Inverness Common Good Fund Grants Sub-Committee held on 3 August 2026; and
iii. **APPROVED** Inverness Events and Festivals Working Group held on 30 June 2026 and 6 August 2026.

14. Inverness Local Holidays 2027/2028

2027
Friday 1 January (New Year's Day)
Monday 4 January (2nd January Holiday)
Monday 1 February
Monday 1 March
Monday 29 March (Easter Monday)
Monday 3 May (May Day Holiday)
Monday 5 July
Monday 4 October
Monday 1 November
Monday 27 December (Christmas Holiday)
Tuesday 28 December (Boxing Day Holiday)

2028
Monday 3 January (New Year's Day Holiday)
Tuesday 4 January (2nd January Holiday)
Monday 7 February
Monday 6 March
Monday 17 April (Easter Monday)
Monday 1 May (May Day Holiday)
Monday 3 July
Monday 2 October
Monday 6 November
Monday 25 December (Christmas Day)
Tuesday 26 December (Boxing Day)

The Committee **AGREED** the above dates as Local Holidays for the City of Inverness for years 2027 and 2028.

The meeting concluded at 3.15 pm.