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MINUTES of MEETING of COWAL GAMES PARTNERSHIP held in the 22 HILL STREET, DUNOON on TUESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2014

Present: Councillor Bruce Marshall (Chair)

Councillor Dick Walsh
Councillor Jimmy McQueen
Shirley MacLeod, Area Governance Manager
Pat McCann, Culture and Libraries Manager
Malcolm Barclay, Cowal Highland Gathering
Ronnie Cairns, Cowal Highland Gathering
Allan MacDonald, Amenity Services Manager
CI Gary Stitt, Police Scotland
Callum Robertson, Contracts Manager
Fraser McCowan, Cowal Highland Gathering

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from:-

Councillor Alex MacNaughton

2. **MINUTES**

The minute of the previous Cowal Games Partnership held on 30th June 2014 were approved as a correct record.

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public from the following item of business on the grounds that it was likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. **MANAGERS REPORT**

A Managers Report was submitted and Malcolm Barclay outlined the main areas covered by the report.

He advised that overall the feedback from this years Highland Gathering had been very positive given that this was the first year of the Gathering following the removal of the "major status" of the pipe bank championship by the RSPBA.

Marketing

A large marketing campaign was launched this year using the press, specifically offering redeemable vouchers to Daily Record readers. 335 vouchers were redeemed.

Child free passes were also offered thanks to sponsoring by Inveraray Jail and 245 of these were redeemed.

As a result of the various voucher schemes families reported that they felt they had received value for money.

Social media via facebook and twitter were also heavily used as

advertising platforms and it was felt that these outlets were overall very successful.

It was noted that the only technological hitch on the Saturday was the broadband failure which resulted in the dancing competitions not being streamed live over the internet.

Bands

26 bands had entered the competition with 25 performing on the day. Feedback from the bands was that it was a very enjoyable day with a substantial amount of prize money available.

For next year it is hoped that band entries will be up to around the 45 mark which was felt by the group to be an ample amount.

Malcolm informed the group that there had been difficulties with the RSPBA in regards to how bands are entered into the competitions and how information is cascaded through the RSPBA to the bands, this is something that will need to be looked at in the future.

Top Field

New elements had been added to the top field this year and overall the new events were very positively received by the public. This is something that should be developed further over the next few years.

Malcolm reported that a representative from Event Scotland attended on the Saturday with her family and had been very impressed with the overall event and she felt that Event Scotland should be continuing to support the gathering in which ever ways they can.

Financial Outcomes and Sponsorship

Gate numbers were down on previous years but this was to be expected. Projected financial loss for this year is £7000.

Malcolm informed the group that they have been in talks with the Scottish Salmon Company who have committed to a four year sponsorship deal. It was noted that that more effort would be put into securing patrons and sponsorship for future events.

Partner Updates

Argyll and Bute Council

Roads: No issues to report, early preparation of the cones being put out early ensured the day ran smoothly.

Culture: Pat McCann informed the group he expected that a paper to extend the SLA would be going to the Community Services Committee in December.

Pat asked if Malcolm would produce a post event report and circulate it to him for inclusion in the information which will be submitted to members for consideration.

Amenities: Allan MacDonald commented that the ground in the stadium was looking very good and the clean up after the event went very

smoothly.

Police Scotland

CI Gary Stitt informed the group that there were very few incidents reported and from a policing aspect the day went very well.

Councillor Marshall raised the point that there had been a lot of adverse comments with regard to the coning off of the entire length of Alexander Parade and CI Stitt promised to make changes to this next year.

He also informed the group that they were already looking at the traffic management plan for next year.

Dancers

604 dancers competed this year in the World Highland Dancing Championship with competitors from all over the world attending.

Next Steps

It was agreed that there would need to be a focus on maintaining the quality of the partnership working.

Malcolm informed the group that next years budget would need to be looked at to determine what additional event could be organised. He also suggested that for 2016 they may start looking at holding events on the Sunday as well.

He also hoped that as 2015 is the year of Food and Drink that he would be able to liaise with Food From Argyll to encourage them to attend next years event.

4. MATTERS ARISING

None

5. A.O.C.B

None

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the Senior Area Committee Assistant would liaise with Malcolm Barclay and Ronnie Cairns to arrange the date of the next meeting.

