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| HIGH LIFE HIGHLAND  REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS  19 March 2020 | AGENDA ITEM REPORT No HLH /20 |

## **CHair/chIEF EXECUTIVE’S UPDATES - Report by Chief Executive**

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| **Summary** The purpose of this report is to provide Directors with information and the opportunity to discuss issues affecting HLH and its work at an early stage.  It is recommended Directors:   1. comment on and note the updates; and 2. consider if they wish the Board to be represented on the Athlete Travel Award panel and to appoint a representative as required. |

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| **1.** | **Business Plan Contribution** |
| 1.1 | This report supports the highlighted Business Outcomes from the High Life Highland (HLH) Business Plan:   1. Sustain a high standard of health and safety, and environmental performance 2. **Implement the Service Delivery Contract with THC** 3. **Improving customer engagement and satisfaction** 4. **Improving staff engagement and satisfaction** 5. **Enhance the positive charity image** 6. Be a trusted and effective partner 7. Achieve sustainable growth across the organisation 8. **Develop health and wellbeing across Highland communities** 9. **Develop and promote the High Life brand** |
| **2.** | **Opportunities for Directors to Represent HLH – Update** |
| 2.1 | Directors were circulated with invites to the following events:   * Café at Hilton – Ian Ross attended the reopening of the Café on 17 January 2020. * McRobert Cup cross country event - Bught Park 18 March 2020 * Annual Highland Young Musicians Youth Music Festival – 21 March 2020 * Strathpeffer Pavilion – Funbox – 29 March 2020 * Strathpeffer Pavilion – Dingwall Choral – 18 April 2020 * Inverness Castle – Doors Open Day(s) 8-10 May 2020 – see below * Strathpeffer Pavilion – June Field – 14 May 2020 * Strathpeffer Pavilion – Highland Chamber Orchestra – 31 May 2020 * Inverness Town House – Highland Young Musician of the Year public final – 6 June 2020 * Strathpeffer Pavilion - Budapest café Orchestra - 14 June 2020 |
| 2.2 | Sportscotland – Athlete Travel Award Panel |
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| 2.2.1  2.2.2 | **Sport**scotland funding is available through the Partnership Agreement to allocate to individuals athletes for travel expenses. There are 8 awards of £1500 available. **sport**scotland requires that a local panel be set up to allocate the awards comprising: **sport**scotland, HLH’s two **sport**scotland funded sports hubs officers, Principal Sports Development Manager and the Council COSLA representative  (Cllr John Finlayson).    There is an option for (but no requirement) to include an HLH Director on the decision-making panel. For 2020 the expected requirement/time commitment would be as follows:   * Detailed examination of a shortleet of applications (week of 20 April 2020) * Meeting as part of a panel once per year (week of 27 April 2020) |
| 2.2.3 | Directors are asked to consider if they wish the HLH Board to be represented on the panel and to appoint a representative for 2020 as required. |
| **3** | **Safe Highlander Events 2020** |
| 3.1 | Directors are invited to attend a 2020 Safe Highlander event. Safe Highlanders is a series of annual events that promotes: community safety; health; and crime prevention to primary seven school pupils during which they learn about life saving skills including first aid, fire and water safety, safety on roads and internet safety. Children are also presented with the dangers of electricity, building sites and substance misuse. The event aims to help children become more aware of personal safety; potentially avoid becoming victims of crime; and understand how to react to emergency situations. |
| 3.2 | Four years ago, High Life Highland offered to take on the co-ordination role for Safe Highlanders on behalf of the Council and Community Planning Partners and expand the programme and reinstated events which had previously been run. There are now seven events across the Highland area. It is currently one of the largest partnership projects in the Highlands. |
| 3.3 | The main Inverness event is running between 18-22 May 2020 at the Cameron Barracks, Inverness. The VIP day is on Tuesday 22 May, groups start at 09:00, 11:00 and 13:30. Directors are encouraged to attend these or any of the other local Safe Highlander events listed below:  27 May 2020 - Aviemore Community Centre  3 June 2020 – Nevis Centre, Fort William  8 June 2020 - Ferrycroft Visitor Centre, Lairg  16 June 2020 - Portree High School  1 and 2 September 2020 – Wick Assembly Rooms  6 - 8 October 2020 - Dingwall Leisure Centre |
| **4.** | **Doors Open Day** |
| 4.1 | Staff at the Highland Folk Museum were delighted in early February to receive a Gold Award certificate for Commitment to Improvement from The Scottish Civic Trust. This was a thank you and recognition of HFM’s contribution to the 2019 Doors Open Days event, especially in terms of the feedback that was provided to the Civic Trust from last year’s events which took place on the afternoons of the 28 and 29 September 2019.  This year the “Doors Open Day” event will be on Sunday 20 September 2020 with an open stores session at Am Fasgadh, 11am to 4pm. |
| 4.2 | On 1 May 2020 The Highland Council will complete the purchase of the South Tower of Inverness Castle, transferring ownership from Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service.  At the end of June enabling contract work will commence in the Castle in advance of the full construction contracts starting in summer 2021.  Before the enabling contract work begins, a Doors Open Weekend is planned for the weekend of 8-10 May. This will see both towers of the Castle building open for public access for the first time and before the building closes for four years to complete its transformation into a world class visitor attraction.  Planning is underway for a programme of events for the Doors Open Weekend, marking this occasion when members of the public can see inside the Castle for the first time.  The date coincides with the May Day Public Holiday, the commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of VE Day and the Inverness Classic Car Rally.  The weekend offers the opportunity for a brief insight into the history of the Castle and plans for the transformation of the Castle into a unique visitor attraction ahead of the buildings closing for refurbishment.  The Doors Open Weekend programme will be extended to include Inverness Town House, Inverness Museum and Art Gallery and Castle Viewpoint, as well as encouraging the use of the public spaces on Castlehill. |
| **5.** | **Leisure Link Partnership** |
| 5.1  5.2 | Sport Aberdeen are the latest to join the Leisure Link Partnership which allows members of fitness schemes to access gym, public swimming and fitness classes at leisure facilities across all of the member regions at no extra cost as part of their existing home based membership. Current members of the scheme are Highland, Moray, Orkney, the Western Isles, Argyll and Bute, Borders and now Sport Aberdeen.  And hot off the press, I am delighted to confirm that the Leisure Link submission to the CLUK Awards 2020 has been shortlisted in the Strategic Partnership Category with the Award Ceremony taking place in Manchester on 20May 2020. |
| **6.** | **MAHR** |
| 6.1 | Following a breakdown in the contract between THC and MAHR and withdrawal of access for ***high****life* members on 27 December 2019, successful talks between Highland Council and Macdonald Hotels have resulted in an interim agreement, enabling ***high****life* members to return to the leisure facilities at Macdonald Aviemore resort with immediate effect.  It is hoped that the arrangements, which will operate initially on a rolling monthly basis, will be extended for a period of up to three years, providing certainty for all parties and especially for ***high****life* members. |
| **7.** | **STEM Board and Science Skills Academy** |
| 7.1 | HIE’s Head of Universities, Education and Skills approached HLH to discuss how to build on the already well-established relationship between High Life Highland and the Science Skills Academy (SSA) and how to collaboratively support progressing the STEM skills agenda in wider community settings. Following discussions with the HLH Chief Executive, HLH have now been invited to sit on the STEM regional Board (CE level) and the SSA Project Board, John West, Director of Culture and Learning will represent HLH on this Board. |
| **8.** | **New Alness Academy Facility** |
| 8.1 | Catering for 660 pupils the new £34M Alness Academy facility will have community facilities including a six-lane swimming pool, a games hall, gym, and two floodlit 3G pitches. Work is on schedule with HLH expecting handover on 10 April and planning is well underway for the new facilities expected opening date of 17 April 2020. |
| **9.** | **Caithness Horizons** |
| 9.1  9.2  9.3 | The HLH Board in June 2019 agreed that it would adopt responsibility for the operation of Caithness Horizons on THC’s behalf.  THC are funding the capital works required and these are now being finalised in preparation for operational handover with a provisional HLH entry date of 1 April, 2020 subject to completion of works. THC and Dounreay Site Restoration Limited have confirmed that the 3 year funding/management agreement (£75K per annum) will commence from HLH date of entry with an annual business review scheduled.  The HLH  team have been working in the background to facilitate opening to the public at the earliest opportunity to take advantage of the tourist season. On opening, the facility will be relaunched as North Coast Visitor Centre and will feature a catering offering in line with the new HLH catering strategy. |
| **10.** | **Strathpeffer Pavilion** |
| 10.1 | Following the December HLH Board meeting delegating authority to the Finance and Audit Committee to consider the Strathpeffer Pavilion Business Case, the Business Case recommendation for HLH to adopt the operation of Strathpeffer Pavilion was approved at 24 February 2020 Finance and Audit Committee meeting with transfer set for 1 April 2020. |
| **11.** | **Park Primary School** |
| 11.1 | On Monday 24 February 2020 Park Primary School, Invergordon, suffered a serious fire resulting in its closure and relocation of pupils to Invergordon Academy on the Thursday that same week. During the intervening two days while the Council was carrying out the necessary work at Invergordon Academy HLH staff at Invergordon Leisure Centre and Active Schools staff ran all day programmes for the 180 school pupils in the Leisure Centre and Invergordon Arts Centre. The swift response of staff in supporting the Council was appreciated by school pupils, parents and the Council. The Council’s nursery provision will be housed in the Invergordon Leisure Centre creche up to the Easter school holiday. Some of the HLH staff in Invergordon are retained personnel with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and also attended the fire. |
| **12.** | **Implications** |
| 12.1 | Resource Implications – there are no additional resource implications arising from this report. |
| 12.2 | Legal Implications - there are no new legal implications arising from this report. |
| 12.3 | Equality Implications – there are no new equality implications arising from this report. |
| 12.4 | Risk Implications – there are no new risk implications arising from this report. |

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| **Recommendations** It is recommended Directors:   1. comment on and note the updates; and 2. consider if they wish the Board to be represented on the Athlete Travel Award panel and to appoint a representative as required. |

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 9 March 2020