



MINUTES OF THE (ZOOM) MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GAIRLOCH & DISTRICT HERITAGE COMPANY LTD

24 February 2021
Gairloch Museum. 4.30 pm.

Present Roy Macintyre; Karen Buchanan; Pauline Butler; Jeremy Fenton; Liz Forrest; Nevis Hulme; Irene Macintyre; Anne MacLennan; Barbara Mackenzie; Willie Macrae; Jean Ross; Eilidh Smith; Ben Thomas.

Apologies Allan Templeton.

1. Conflicts of Interest

All Board members have completed a Declaration of Interests statement for 2021.
No potential conflict of interest was declared with respect to the Agenda.

2. Minutes of the (Zoom) Board meeting of 13 January

The minutes of the 13 January meeting were agreed to be a correct record, proposed by Nevis and seconded by Anne.

Matters arising:

- i) Each Board member has now been given access to an online Folder which includes the key governance documents, policies and branding package.
- ii) HIE have no funding stream currently to support a 'Forward Planning' consultancy or advisor.

3. Financial report

- i) Roy reported that the bank balance continues to show a healthy credit, having had several grant contributions towards ongoing projects paid upfront. The Covid-19 support grant from the Wolfson Foundation has been received.
- ii) The application to Highland Council for a COVID-19 Small Business Grant towards core costs each month during this current period of enforced closure was successful.
- iii) Davie is hoping that PNL can prepare draft 2020 Accounts by end March. The figures demonstrate that the working estimate of average monthly operational costs being c.£8,500, as submitted to MGS last spring, was accurate.
- iv) The draft Financial Reserves policy was ratified, subject to any amendments arising from advice from Scott-Moncrieff about the Trading Company which has been set up but not yet activated.
- v) The situation with respect to the Chapel of Sand account was explained. Jean agreed to meet with those still involved at Laide as to whether there are plans to invest the balance by making further improvements at the site.
- vi) We await quotations for our insurance renewal, due in April.

4. Curator's Report

Karen talked us through the many pleasing activities that are ongoing with respect to:

Building and grounds; Collections; Interpretation and displays; Education and training; Events; Marketing and promotion; Projects. Her Report will be circulated with the Minutes.

5. Registration with Disclosure Scotland

A briefing paper was circulated with respect to the arrangements with GALE who have acted as our 'intermediary organisation' for registration with Disclosure Scotland since March 2019. GALE now intend that we enrol directly with the Disclosure Service. After discussion, it was agreed that, given that there are always staff and/or carers present when we engage in activities with young people and vulnerable adults, we do not need to set up an organisational registration. Several Board/staff members are already registered.

6. Outdoors Museum projects

Work has now started on site and Roy is dealing with practical issues arising. The funding campaign, with a target of £20K, is about to be launched. A report on the Archaeological Trail aspect is required by the Postcode Lottery Fund by the end of April, together with a 'case study' of a related community activity.

7. Action Plan review and forward planning

- i) Pauline had received feedback where requested on what had been achieved on the 2019-2020 (+) Action Plan and had circulated a 'final' colour-coded review. This was ratified by the Board.
- ii) She will now seek input for the 2021-2022 Action Plan. Those actions which have, since the new Museum opened, become integrated into our ongoing practice and core work will be separated out (though still acknowledged to be important) from 'new' developments. Ben offered to help with the framework and identification of success criteria.
- iii) Although we recognise the need to think strategically for the longer term and work on a Forward Plan to cover 2021-2025, this is difficult to action collaboratively in the current circumstances.

8. Exhibitions

The notes from the Planning Group meeting held on 19 January were circulated. The planned exhibition slots are going to have to be re-jigged because of Covid-closure for the foreseeable future.

9. Commercial and retail operations

The notes from the COG meetings held on 13 January and 18 February have been circulated.

- i) Following interviews, Alasdair MacNeill has been appointed as the third member of the FoH Coordinators team. A start date will be arranged in due course.
- ii) Eilidh reported that social media and marketing is very busy. There is a real momentum arising from the Art Fund MotY2020 Award and it is evident that many more people are engaging with our online blogs, talks and Facebook posts. Being 'on the map' like this promises well for when we can open.
- iii) We cannot yet plan for 2021 opening. Eilidh is investigating how the Art Fund online booking system works, with a view to offering this as an option for future visitors. She continues to seek details about the cost of a bigger 'brown' sign from Highland Council. Barbara has successfully undertaken the training required to be a Scottish Personal Licence Holder and is now committed to a 10 week long Tourism and Hospitality Supervisor course.

- iv) The café tables have now arrived. Other fitting out awaits the appointment of a café manager, with interviews scheduled for 25 February. Selected prose and poetry verses and complementary photographs for the café panels have been sent to the design team.
- v) Nevis has recirculated a draft Electrical Services Schedule for checking. Roy and Willie will also review our legal obligations as commercial landlords to ensure that we are fully compliant.
- vi) The lease with West Highland College has been finalised, ready for signature.
- vii) Highland Council is enabling the installation of Openreach fibre broadband for the WHC rooms which should make it possible to improve our own connectivity at reasonable cost.
- viii) Despite assurances, Simpsons have still to install the grille baffles required for the library.

10. Any Other Business

- i) The Achtercairn project, of which the Museum was the final piece, was shortlisted for a 2020 SURF award, "housing and regeneration" category. Although it did not win, this was further recognition of the community significance of our 'new Museum'. Ben will be alert to any relevant opportunities that might arise within the SURF organisation.
- ii) LDN architects were shortlisted for their work on Gairloch Museum in an *Architects' Journal* competition.
- iii) Ben is pursuing the potential of a University of Stirling student work placement at the Museum, looking at data audit and analysis.
- iv) Nevis raised the issue of difficulties experienced in making donations via Totalgiving using a Facebook account. Eilidh is following this up.

11. Date of next meeting

There being no other business, the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 7 April at 4.30 pm.

The meeting ended at 5.50 pm.