

DORNOCH HERITAGE SCOTTISH CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION (DHSCIO)
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HELD ON 7th FEBRUARY 2023

PRESENT ~ Jerry Bishop (Chair), Tony Rundle (Secretary/Treasurer), Alison Davies, Fiona McKinlay, Brian Munro, and Andrew Senior. Peter Wild in attendance.

ELIZABETH OAKES: The Chair referred to the untimely death of Elizabeth Oakes on Saturday 4th February. In paying tribute to Elizabeth, he stated that, as well as being a long-standing member of the SCIO Board, she had been a member of the Heritage Society committee, and a valuable museum volunteer. It was suggested that a memorial planter and plaque be placed in the Museum's garden.

1. MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 12th December 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

2. TRUSTEES:

a) Welcome: The Chair welcomed Fiona McKinlay to her first meeting of the DHSCIO Board, and she duly signed the appropriate Register entry.

b) Farewell: The Chair referred to the resignation of Brian Munro, who was leaving the area, and also advised members that Tony Rundle would be standing down in July/August 2023, as he, also, was re-locating.

c) Skills Audit: It was **agreed** that the Chair undertake a skills audit of existing Trustees.

d) Board Strengthening: A number of potential Board members were mentioned, with a view to these being followed up. AS also mentioned that he would like to sit on one of the SCIO's committees, in addition to being a member of the Board.

3. PROJECT UP-DATES:

a) Energy Saving Project: The Chair reported that, following discussions with Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) and Business Energy Scotland (BES), and in order to secure the most advantageous funding for the project, it had been split into two separate phases. An MGS grant had been approved to finance Phase One (which incorporated heating the two offices and a storeroom, and insulating the offices), and contractors were available to start work on 27th February. Phase Two would cover the remainder of the project, including improvements in insulation, and it was hoped that a funding application to the Energy Saving Trust (EST) for that phase could be submitted by 31st March.

It was anticipated that completion of the project would produce a significant reduction in the Museum's future energy costs.

b) Heritage Hub Project: The Chair referred to the recent announcement by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) that the project had been successful in securing a grant of approximately £250,000. He tabled a document setting out the increased cost of the project, and also listing not only existing grant sources, but also potential funders. In this connection, it was **agreed** a) that the Chair be authorised to conduct negotiations regarding a grant from the Common Good Fund, and b) that, subject to NLHF permission, this major grant approval be notified to SCIO members.

4. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a) Museum Committee: AD reported that ~

i) The Museum would be re-opening on 1st April 2023;

ii) The proposed booklet featuring historical blogs published by Ebby Ritchie was nearing publication;

iii) Following closure during the Covid lock-down, access to the Children's' Room was being reinstated;

iv) The Museum Assistant would be conducting training of new volunteers and a work-experience student;

v) A major display would feature the career of Chris Murray (RN diver and H.M. Coastguard winchman);

vi) She was following up potential new committee members;

- vii) Brian Munro had donated a collection of Donald Ross artefacts to the Museum. The Chair stated that an approach had been made by the village of Pinehurst (N. Carolina) which was the home of the Pinehurst Golf Course, regarding the possibility of twinning;
 - viii) The Curator had secured the medals and letters of Lance-Sergeant Donald Mackay M.M. Reference was made to the assistance of the National Fund for Acquisitions, and family members;
 - ix) The Museum's Archive and collection records had been transferred to a new dedicated cloud server;
 - x) Committee members had conducted a walk-through of the building the previous day, to identify any work required prior to re-opening;
 - xi) The Curator had received an MGS grant for the purchase of photographic equipment;
 - xii) She would be conducting a performance review with the Curator during March 2023;
 - xiii) The Curator was, pro tem, covering the supervision of YCC activities on Wednesday evenings;
 - xiv) An application was being submitted for the funding of an Outreach Worker.
- b) Heritage Society Committee: PW reported that a very successful Burns Supper had been held recently, and there remained three talks before the end of the DHS' winter season. He reminded members that the venue of the next talk, 'Beneath my Wings' had been changed to the old Council Chamber (above the library), and would take place on 23rd February. He mentioned that he had been approached by two potential volunteers.

5. FINANCE:

- a) The Board noted summaries of Museum and DHS Income & Expenditure to date, together with an up-dated overview of the current Young Curators' Club (YCC) project. TR reported the current balances of the SCIO's various bank and investment accounts. AD stated that it would be useful if members of the YCC could stage some further fund-raising events.
- b) Members considered one application for Associate SCIO Membership. It was **agreed** that the application be approved.
- c) Consideration was given to a draft budget for the Museum, in respect of FY 2023/24. It was **agreed** that the budget be approved, and that salary increases be applied for 23/24, as discussed.

6. REPLACEMENT OF TREASURER/SECRETARY: The Chair had circulated a report showing the various duties and responsibilities of the current Treasurer/Secretary across the SCIO and its sub-committees. He stated that, subject to some satisfactory arrangement being made concerning the post of SCIO Chair, he would be willing to undertake the Treasurer's role. AD suggested that the Chair's post might be shared. FM expressed an interest in the role of Treasurer, but it was **agreed** to defer any decision on the election of replacement officers until the next meeting of the Board.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 11th April 2023 at 11 a.m.