

**DORNOCH HERITAGE SCOTTISH CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION  
(DHSCIO)**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, HELD ON 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL  
2019**

**PRESENT** ~ Jerry Bishop (Chair), Tony Rundle (Secretary/Treasurer), Alison Davies, Brian Munro, Elizabeth Oakes and Andrew Senior.

**IN ATTENDANCE** ~ Peter Wild.

**1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2019**

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 were confirmed as a correct record.

**2. INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS:** JBi suggested that, with the Board's agreement, the outstanding monies earmarked for investment (£10,000) should be placed in a temporary 12 month fixed-rate account. It was **agreed** that JBi and TR be authorised to make arrangements for this investment.

**3. MUSEUM INSURANCE:** The Chair stated that the Museum's insurance for FY 2019/20 had been placed with Bruce Stevenson Insurance Brokers, as part of an overall arrangement organised by the HMF.

**4. FINANCE:**

a) Annual Accounts 2018/19: The annual accounts for the Museum and the Heritage Society were considered by the Board. Members were advised that these accounts had yet to be amalgamated, and a statement of balances drawn up. BM asked if it would be possible to show income from admissions and the Museum's shop in the formal accounts, and was advised that this had been discontinued when the Museum started accepting card payments. The relevant information would, however, continue to be provided at Museum and Board meetings.

b) Highland Council Grant: Members were advised that the HC/High Life Highland revenue grant had been continued for the current financial year, the first instalment of £3,137 having been received the previous day.

c) Counter Receipts: TR reported that over £2,000 had been received by the Museum since its opening on 30<sup>th</sup> March, which compared favourably with receipts for the same period of 2018.

**5. POLICY REVIEWS:** The Chair referred to HL's 2019-2021 Forward Plan (see below) and, in particular, the summary in para. 8.4 of the current status of Policy Documents. With the exception of a limited number of documents, most policies had not been reviewed for many years. He suggested that two documents be reviewed for consideration at each meeting of the Board, and that immediate attention be given to the Absence, and Access Policies. AD requested that she be consulted regarding the revision of any policies affecting staff matters, and it was felt that Board members' comments should be invited on draft revisions. It was **agreed** that BM and AS undertake the preliminary revision of the above Policy Documents, for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

**6. HISTORYLINKS MUSEUM ~ FORWARD PLAN 2019-2021:** It was **agreed** that this plan be formally adopted by the Board.

## **7. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

a) Historylinks Museum: AD stated that, in company with the Curator, she was meeting with Lorna Cruickshank (Museums Officer at High Life Highland) in the near future.

Funding for the Longhouse Project had been approved by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), and it was anticipated that the project would commence in autumn 2019. The project would involve the research of land records to ascertain the historical occupation of the site, and the demographic effect of the Highland Clearances.

She reported on the recent appointment of Caroline Seymour to the posts of Museum Assistant and also Leader of the Young Curators' Club.

An extension of time to the end of May 2019 had been allowed for the completion of work on the Sheriff McCulloch Memorial Project, but the process of removing lichen from the memorial would probably take until the end of the year. Members expressed their appreciation of a press release originated by BM for the Northern Times.

There was nothing to report concerning the future organisation of the Highland Museums Forum.

Members were also advised that contact had been re-established with Estelle Quick, with a view to securing the continuation of her role as Curatorial Adviser.

b) Dornoch Heritage Society: EO referred to the meeting of the Heritage Society's committee on 11<sup>th</sup> April, and the recent well-attended talk by Anne Coombes about the Tarradale Archaeological Project. The Society would be holding a Coffee Morning on 11<sup>th</sup> May (at the Social Club), which would coincide with the Museum's Open Doors week-end. Future plans included attendance at the Sutherland Show (20<sup>th</sup> July), a Film Night (13<sup>th</sup> December) and the annual Burns Night dinner (24<sup>th</sup> January 2020).

**8. MEMBERSHIP:** JBi reported on applications for membership of the SCIO, received since the February meeting of the Board. It was **agreed** that the applications be approved, and that a special membership category of "Friend" be created, which would not carry any voting rights. (Post-note: the current membership stands at 201 [Full 157, Associate 36, and Honorary 8] together with 2 Friends).

**9. EXTENSION PROJECT:** The Chair reported that, following receipt of the SLF grant, Impact Hub had been appointed to carry out preliminary work, and had produced some design and layout sketches for consideration. He had asked the Torrance Partnership to value the Museum site. He referred to a recent presentation which he had given to the Dornoch Community Council (DCC), which was prepared to provide written evidence of its total support for the project. He was now intending to use the preliminary design sketches as a basis for an outline planning application for the larger 'foot-print' layout, which application DCC had agreed to facilitate.

He suggested that the proposed Museum open days on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> May could be utilised to put the project on display to the public, with written responses to a pro-forma questionnaire being invited. It was also suggested that a supply of A4 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheets be provided for public information. It was **agreed** that a rota of volunteers be drawn up to cover fully the open days. AD stated that she hoped to involve members of the YCC.

JBi referred to the contents of a burial cist at Spinningdale, and also the Migdale Hoard, both of which were retained by the National Museum of Scotland, and expressed the hope that, given the anticipated expansion in display space, Historylinks Museum might be able to put these artefacts on display.

**10. PROJECT CURLEW:** JBi noted recent discussions with DACIC regarding their project 'Curlew', to build an indoor Curling rink with a Heritage element attached on Dornoch South. This would hopefully involve Historylinks archive items being on display. It was **agreed** a letter of support for this project be sent to DACIC.

**11. GUIDED WALKS:** It was reported that a local historian, whose definitive work on the history of Dornoch was stocked by the Museum, had been in touch with the Curator, offering his services with regard to assisting with guided walks. It was **agreed** that this matter be further investigated. In this connection, JBi stated that plans were being made for the organisation of a Halloween Walk.

**12. MUSEUM'S 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY:** It was noted that 2019 marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of Historylinks, and it was **agreed** that an appropriate display and marketing event should be held in the autumn, to recognise this.

**13. WELCOME TALKS:** The Board was advised that Joan Bishop had been contacted by a tour company, asking if arrangements could be made for visitors to be given an informative welcome talk at their hotel during the June – September 2020 period. It was **agreed** that this suggestion be followed up.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at 2 p.m.