

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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, HELD ON 7TH FEBRUARY
2019**

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

APOLOGIES ~ Peter Wild.

1. MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON 6TH DECEMBER 2018 & 7TH JANUARY 2019

The minutes of the meetings of the Board held on 6th December 2018 and 7th January 2019 were confirmed as correct records.

2. INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS: JBi confirmed that £10,000 had been placed with Cambridge & Counties Bank. It was **agreed** to delay any further investment until the commencement of the 2019/20 FY.

3. MUSEUM INSURANCE: The Chair outlined the present position regarding renewal of the Museum's insurance, which was due on 1st April 2019. Preparation of an HL asset register was under-way, and the brokers appointed by HMF had, as part of their fact-finding exercise, requested building valuations from member museums. Trustees commented on the urgency of the matter, given the renewal date, and it was suggested that it might be possible to renew insurance on a month-to-month basis.

4. HIGHLAND MUSEUMS FORUM / MUSEUMS & HERITAGE HIGHLAND: AD reported on the Curator's attendance at the meeting of the Forum held on 5th February. Progress was being made regarding the Forum's transition to a SCIO, with a response from the Regulator anticipated by the end of March. The main focus of the meeting had been a presentation about the VisitScotland Quality Assurance scheme's new guidelines. In this connection, Trustees discussed ways in which the sufficiency of the Museum's toilets might be improved, and it was **agreed** that any signage on the toilet and kitchen doors relating to male/female toilets be removed. AD also referred to the introduction of a 'House of Memories' app, which would be launched on 26th February.

Note: The Curator's report on her attendance at this meeting is attached as an appendix.

5. RECRUITMENT: AD referred to discussions which had taken place on 5th February concerning the recruitment of a Museum Assistant, and a Leader for the Young Curators' Club (YCC). It was intended to advertise these posts on 12th February.

The Trustees discussed the implications of employing the Museum Assistant on a year-round basis and it was **agreed** that this possibility might be discussed with suitable candidates. The Board was advised that it was intended to operate the YCC for 40 weekly sessions.

6. FINANCE: Consideration was given to Income & Expenditure summaries of the Museum, and the Heritage Society. JBi also referred to the Museum Committee's budget for 2019/20, which had been approved at its most recent meeting. It was intended to make some provision for adjustment of the Curator's salary, subject to a satisfactory performance review. With regard to the Extension Project, it was suggested that a provision be made in the budget for £2,000 to cover any additional expenses incurred in connection with the Stage One application.

7. POLICY REVIEWS:

a) Child Protection: AD stated that the opportunity had been taken to comprehensively revise this policy, and the new policy document and statement had been approved at the Museum Committee's most recent meeting. It was recognised that this was particularly important in that the Museum was now working with all three elements of the local schools, in addition to operating a Young Curators' Club. It was intended that appropriate training would take place on 26th February.

b) Risk Assessment: The Chair advised the Board that, as part of discussions regarding the Museum's insurance, the question of regularly up-dated risk assessments had arisen. He suggested that a small group of Committee members carry out an inspection of the Museum premises, and that the matter be reviewed at the next meeting of the Board.

8. SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Historylinks Museum: The minutes of the meeting of the Museum Committee held on 5th February had been circulated to Trustees who were non-members. AD referred particularly to her attendance, in company with LM, at a retail training day, and she outlined proposals for re-organisation of the Museum's retail area. In addition to suggestions made by the Museum Committee, it was also proposed that a child-sized cut-out of the Dornoch Imp be produced, to provide a focal point for youngsters' photographs.

AD also reported on progress which was being made with the restoration of the Sheriff McCulloch Memorial, and the accompanying blog which was being published by Ebbie Ritchie.

b) Dornoch Heritage Society: EO referred to two recent social events organised by the DHS, namely the Film Night, and the Burns Supper. She also reminded the Board of the remaining programme of DHS winter talks.

9. MEMBERSHIP UP-DATE & APPLICATIONS: There were currently 199 members, an elderly member having resigned for health reasons. The Chair and Treasurer were monitoring the subscriptions payments which, to a large extent, were up-to-date.

10. EXTENSION PROJECT: The Chair reported that he had, the previous day, received a response from the Scottish Land Fund (SLF), awarding the SCIO funding in the sum of £8,166 towards the cost of Stage One of the project. This was intended to cover such matters as a feasibility study, architectural sketches, obtaining outline planning consent, and the submission of a Community Asset Transfer application to HC.

A provisional date of 28th February had been agreed to meet the consultants on site. JBi again emphasised the importance of being able to demonstrate community involvement in, and support for the project.

Reference was made to potential funding for capital elements of the project which might be available from the Beatrice Offshore Wind Farm Fund, which would come into operation from October 2019. This would, however, require that the extension project could be shown to contribute to the local economy.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 25th April 2019 at 2 p.m.

Appendix

HMF MEETING REPORT

The HMF meeting mainly focussed on the VisitScotland Quality Assurance Scheme. Caroline from VisitScotland spoke to us about the new guidelines and said that they are placing a larger focus on

the Staff and Hospitality section looking at things like the foreign language provision. We can get help with translations via Interface in Dingwall. I thought I might go through the staffing features at our volunteer training sessions just to let the volunteers know what VS are looking for. However, I feel that we come out on top as far as friendliness and interaction with visitors goes.

She talked about entrance fee displaying and the overall pre-visit experience and look of the outside space which we have already addressed. Retail is a big thing too. For example, space, presentation, quality of products but again we are going to sort that out. We scored a 7 on our toilets due to lack of provision, they consider that we might not have enough toilets to cover the busy times in the museum. There is nothing we can do about that until we have an extension on the building so we just need to get our scores up for the other aspects. She suggested that we check our VisitScotland web listing frequently and email her when there are to be new exhibitions etc. also to join the VS Facebook page.

On other matters -

Alison reported that the SCIO application for HMF was in and they should receive a response by the end of March. They are looking for funding to progress the project.

Alison also said that they were looking into the cruise liner market with a view to working out tours of the Highland Museums as a package for visitors.

A company called Star Additions are working with HMF to create branded goods.

House of Memories App. For use with people with dementia.

The App is now completed and has 26 key images plus 60 associated images, music and video.

The launch of the App is on Tuesday 26th February and as we have provided some images, I have been invited along.

Lorna has organised training in using the App and has had a huge uptake from the NHS and other associated groups. There are about 100 people on the waiting list for training and so there may eventually be sessions available locally.

There may be an opportunity for a paid position and need has been identified for a bigger partnership project with the NHS. The aim is to provide a tablet to each museum that can be used in local care homes or loaned out to individual carers looking after someone with dementia.

Lorna reported that HMF has received £40,000 to produce a new leaflet of the Pictish trail. This will include leaflet, website, and promotion of the trail and engagement activities. Mathew Withey of Inverness Museum is heading up a steering group with HMF, Historic Scotland, the different museums on the trail and the Hilton and Shandwick stone group.

There was some discussion about insurance with people not very clear about what to put on the asset list. There was a feeling that because most things are not replaceable that even if they were insured, in the event of a fire or other disaster the loss adjuster might decide not to pay out anyway. In the end it was felt that it was up to each museum to decide what to put on the asset list so not really any further forward.