

Minutes of Ullapool Museum Board Meeting – held 9am 1st June 2023 by zoom.

Present: - Mhairi Muncaster, George Hobbs, Erik Lundberg, Penny Stewart and Siobhan Beatson - Ullapool Museum Manager.

1. Apologies :- Jemma Middleton
2. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th January were approved by Mhairi, George and Erik. Two points from the last meeting were discussed. Mhairi is to speak to Marian Hobbs regarding joining the board. Also Mhairi asked that as Siobhan's salary increase was approved, was it now being paid. Siobhan confirmed that it was.

3. Budget 2023/2024

A spreadsheet with previous years' income and expenditure and current year predictions was circulated prior to the meeting. Siobhan explained that there were differences with categories on the various spreadsheets being used, she has changed these so that they are the consistent across all and easier to use. It was also agreed that 29K was a realistic target for this year based on the best year pre Covid of 2019. Siobhan also explained that the cruise ship market was being targeted more this year. Mairead is organising small events in the museum on days when the largest of the cruise ships are in. It was also mentioned that number of cruise ships anticipated next year is expected to be three times the number arriving this year. There was a discussion around the admittance charge which was last increased in 2020 to £5, and the thought of moving to free entry if sales from the shop increased. This discussion is to be revisited at a later date. Online expenditure was questioned and explained as subscriptions to CANVA and Find My Past.

Mhairi raised the subject of rates and said she would be contacting Maree Todd and Liz Kraft regarding rates for An Talla Solais and Ullapool Museum. There was a discussion around the classification of the stores as commercial. Clarification was to be sought on this as it was felt that it was referring to the stores as a shop which would generate income. Siobhan was also going to speak to other museums to compare figures.

4. Stores Project

Siobhan explained that the buildings were not being used to their full potential. Both buildings required some significant work to make them habitable and fit for purpose eg plumbing and electrics. The big store was to be a collections and object store and the curator store to be an archive room. Funding for the project was being applied for from the National Archives Resilience Fund, this would be for August for a year and training from Jo on Ehive for Siobhan. Funding was also being applied for from MGS who it was felt may be more likely to give funding as they would not be paying all the funding. A budget would be put together and quotes sought. Siobhan also explained that the Museum's Accreditation, which was due imminently would be at risk which was why the work needed doing. The possibility of a Crowd-funder was also discussed. Erik raised concerns with the safety of staff onsite as there was no fire alarm, fire extinguishers or procedures. Mhairi was to forward the name of a contact in the fire department who had helped with similar issues at An Talla Solais. A risk assessment would be required as the current one was probably out of date. Siobhan to complete this. There was also a discussion around using one company for fire and alarm systems maintenance instead of the current position of using separate ones. A quote was to be obtained from Northern Security for fire and alarm systems. Erik was to pass on recommendations for suppliers of fire extinguishers etc to Siobhan. There was a conversation

around using Erik as the architect for the stores project, and if this was to be the case a register of interest would be required, as required in the Museum's Articles of Association. Mhairi would email a register of interest form to Siobhan to be used. It was agreed by the board that Erik should be used and paid as architect for the project.

5. Strategic Planning

Mhairi to contact the company who had previously offered free guidance with Strategic Planning. She also mentioned that there may be a possibility of getting funding through EDF. Siobhan would also look at other options for free guidance with Strategic Planning through MGS, HLF etc.

6. Rates

Rates were included as part of the discussion on the budget for the year. Siobhan to send Mhairi the document regarding the rates and to attend the meeting with Maree Todd and Liz Kraft with Mhairi.

7. AOB

Income from the new shop layout, stock and visitor numbers were good. Erik asked a question regarding the boundary of the museum. Siobhan replied that the museum has "nominal" use of the ground between the door and the gate but basically it was the building. The graveyard was council property.

The next meeting is to be in September, date to be confirmed.

Meeting closed at 9.55am