Minutes of Ullapool Museum board meeting. 7th April 2025 at 10:30am.

Present:- Siobhan Beatson, August Maclean, Penny Stewart, Mhairi Muncaster, Neil Lebeter, Erik Lundberg

Apologies:- George Hobbs

Minutes:- The minutes from last meeting were proposed by Penny Stewart and seconded by Mhairi Muncaster.

1. University visits

The Penn state student visit is set for the end of June, they will be coming for two days in which they shall have a tour of the village and the Inverlael site. They will also meet with Edel at the harbour to get some more insight for their project.
No new updates on the UHI residency. They have been looking for a community space they could use as a workshop area during their visit, the room in An Talla Solais would suit well.

2. First cruise

We had the first cruise of the year on our first day open which went very well. The first invoice for £569 has been put in, £320 was made from shop sales and we had a few non cruise visitors as well. This makes probably the best opening week we've ever had. Some of the tour groups were a bit bunched up which made it quite busy at times but was handled. The larger cruises in the year may require a second person on the desk to help as answering questions while also working the till can get a bit overwhelming. The next cruise is lined up for next week and we are generally optimistic about them this year.

3. Electricians

Euan has fixed the socket that was tripping fuses in the museum, and removed the old lights from the stores building.

4. Museum events

We have been accepted as a speaker for the Scottish Museum Federation conference in Dundee on the 12th of May which Siobhan will be attending and giving a presentation on Inverlael and how it has helped us find new perspective on how to take the museum forward and target new audiences. Accommodation and travel will need to be sorted.
The MHH conference takes place in Inverness on the 22nd of May which Siobhan and August shall be attending. As a two day event, accommodation for the night between will need to be arranged.

5. Electricity supplier

We are looking to change electric supplier next year due to changes and increase in price. We have been with British gas but when the contract runs out in April of 2026 we will be moving to Northern gas and power which should remain more stable for the next few years.

6. Job positions

There has yet to be any interest in the posted job roles of admin and sunday front of house, it may end up that the museum won't be open on Sundays this year.

7. Community events coordinator

There have been discussions with the Village Hall and Macphail Centre about some form of coordinator that can benefit most or all groups involved such as having a person who can collate all the events going on. They would likely have to be based with one group as their employer but be able to do work with the others. Due to every organisation working in different ways and needing different things, and also having different ideas of what this role would do, it may be hard to work the role to cover everyone suitably but we are waiting to see what ideas are brought forth.

8. Stores update

We are on the very tail end of the construction, with only the removal of the portacabin to be done. August has moved the majority of the objects into their new locations and the finish target of late May to mid June should be easily done. Then it's a shift to admin and outreach work after that.

9. Museum works

With the planned renovation work to the windows and structure, it would be a good time to check the energy efficiency and do a mini redisplay. Bringing it all together will require a feasibility study which will require initial funding, most likely from HES. It will likely be in the winter of 2025 that this goes ahead as there is no capacity in the next few months for it.

10. Young curators club

Still early stages but the club is going well. There are about 15 people attending and all seem to be engaged with it. A google classroom will be set up for them all where tasks can be set and work uploaded. The Monday sessions will change to Wednesday to better suit schedules. A theme of births, deaths and marriages has been proposed.

11. Comhla

Little to update other than it is going well and 5 projects are being supported as was the goal. The sea savers, much ado about nothing play at the school, young curators club, serve our seniors, and /.

12. Safety concerns

The open/closed sign on the front door is prone to blowing off in the wind so would best be replaced by a more secure sign. Similar ones tend to cost close to £70.
Following an incident of someone entering the museum unnoticed when closed, we are considering the safety measures of the museum, including potentially putting in CCTV. It is not a huge expense but will more likely come down to the security it may provide vs the possible discomfort of being surveilled. The issue lies largely in the front door needing to be open during closed hours due to deliveries not being made if the door is closed despite efforts to inform that someone is in. Neil suggested some kind of wireless doorbell could be installed with a small sign to delivery members so the door can remain locked and someone working in the office can be alerted to deliveries.

13. Finances

Mhairi plans to have a separate discussion with George and Siobhan regarding some financial matters.

Two payments totaling near £4,000 have come in from an unknown source with only numbers as the reference. Siobhan has spoken with the bank and as yet been unable to get a conclusive answer on what or who it is from. The account belongs to Barclays who have notified the owner to get in contact regarding the payments but until they do so, there isn't much we can do except set the money aside for now.

14. Any other business

Mhairi proposed that Siobhan's job title be changed effective immediately from manager to director to better reflect the work she is doing. With agreement, the change is now in effect.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at