

Present: Alan Young, Brian Morton, Ali Heaton, Sandra Jamieson, Audrey Godfrey, Andrea McNicoll and Janice Murray

1. Apologies:

Deborah McCartney, Clare Harley

Alan welcomed Janice Murray as a guest to the meeting.

2. Minutes from last month:

The minutes were approved by Audrey, seconded by Sandra, and will be signed by Alan.

3. Treasurer's Report

Ali reported that hall hire income has been steady. Income for February was £976.44 and expenditure was £814.46. The balance at the end of February was £23, 141.46, and the current balance on the day of the meeting was £37, 601.94. The current balance includes a grant from Highland Council Nature Restoration Fund of £14,625. This represents 75% of the total grant of £19,500 (the remaining 25% will be released once receipts are submitted).

4. Booking Secretary's Report:

Brian reported that outstanding payments have been received from the Post Office and Light and Life. New bookings include a charity fundraising group called Discover Adventure (3 hours) and a wedding booking (1 day + 2 half days) for November. Alan proposed more advertising in order to attract more bookings, with the view to generating enough income from hall hire to keep the hall running comfortably. He pointed out that Light and Life have now cut back on their bookings (Sundays only) and that the Post Office will no longer be using the hall.

Janice Murray added that it would be useful for members of the community to be able to read the hall committee meeting minutes, to stay abreast of developments at the hall. Alan responded that, going forwards, the minutes will be pinned to the local noticeboards and added to the community emails.

5. Hall Matters:

a) Heating – Alan reported that the boiler/heating system will be serviced on March 30th at a cost of approximately £600. This is in response to ongoing issues with the burning temperature of the boiler. Separately the heating controls and radiators in the small hall will require to be checked over as they are not currently performing to the required standard. Members discussed the possibility of using wi-fi and an online app to remotely control the heating system and this will be looked into following the boiler service.

b) Stage carpeting – Alan showed the committee sample carpet tiles from Mathesons Furnishings. The benefit of using tiles is that they can easily be lifted to access trapdoors. All present agreed to the choice, with the estimated costs, including fitting, of £480.

c) Audio-visual equipment – a £3,500 grant has been awarded from Highland Council Ward Discretionary Fund towards equipment. This equipment will be used to broadcast performances and podcasts for audiences in the hall. Alan proposed postponing the purchase of the equipment until

September, in order to have it for the winter months. Janice Murray enquired if this equipment would add to the hall's insurance costs, and Alan responded that it is likely to create an increase of £50 to £100 annually.

d) Electrical inspection – this is carried out every 5 years and is due this month. Jonathan Baxter will carry this and PAT testing out in the next week or two. The inspection will produce the relevant certification.

e) Play equipment – this is now installed. Of the £8000 cost, £4650 was a grant from the builders who erected the houses at Kirk Side, and the remainder was split between the Hall Committee and the Community Council.

f) Public entertainment licence – the new certificate has now been received from Highland Council after a long delay. This will last for 3 years. Copies will be displayed on hall noticeboards.

g) Committee meetings – as discussed, the minutes will be displayed on 4 local noticeboards, by email and on the Centre's Facebook page.

Janice Murray asked about the main hall floor as this issue was raised by Jonathan Baxter during the AGM. Those present all agreed that the floor was still in good condition, and at present needed no further attention apart from regular cleaning.

6. Social Events Programme

Alan reported that Saturday's Music and Curry night was a great success, filling the small hall and raising around £260. Alan thanked Rough Edges for their free contribution and reported that the band was happy to play on 23rd April in the main hall. Alan stressed the need to promote the event widely in order to maximise the income potential from this fundraiser. Alan is enquiring about back up acts for the night. Janice Murray suggested that the young people from Rock School might like to perform – Ali will ask Aileen Hornby about this. Alan will advertise the event through the community email and Andrea will promote it on Facebook. Alan stressed the need to encourage bookings to cover the loss of the PO income, which was the rationale behind the recently produced flyer which is now being distributed to households. Alan mentioned that the hall committee had agreed that Rough Edges can practise free in the hall in recognition of their help in fundraising at no charge.

With regard to the Six Days Trial, Alan has contacted Joanne Baxter and Hilda Milton (who were at the forefront of organising the catering for this event in the past) in order to ascertain whether they would like to be involved again, or could pass on any useful logistical information. All agreed to following the same format as before, with soup and sandwiches/drinks and cakes. Alan mentioned that the event requires 2 teams of volunteers– one inside for catering and one outside to manage the parking.

Members discussed the Queen's Jubilee celebrations, which the Community Council is leading, with help from the hall committee. Janice Murray recommended involving the school children, with races and other activities. Audrey and Deborah have agreed to liaise with Jonathan and the Community Council by joining a sub-committee to take forward arrangements for the event.

More members will be trained to use the small hall coffee machine so that there is a pool ready for community café days.

The aforementioned flyers (which cost £38.44 for 500) will be instrumental in spreading the word about various forthcoming events.

Alan will email the Community Council about the possibility of starting up the Connect Newsletter again.

7. Nature Restoration Fund/Memorial Wood

Alan reported that the £19,500 grant is for the purposes of woodland regeneration, to reduce carbon footprints and increase biodiversity by planting native species hedging, shrubs and trees, and the creation of a 'wet' area with appropriate species. 1750 saplings (hawthorn, blackthorn and other native species) have already been planted along the roadside, top and bottom boundaries of the field to encourage wildlife habitat. Alder and willow will be planted in the wet areas at the end of April – beginning of May. Rob Coope will raise the existing boundary fence height, where required, to provide protection from deer, and a new deer fence will be constructed along the line of the existing drainage ditch. A gate will be included to allow access to the Memorial Wood area for maintenance purposes. Native trees (6-7 foot high), such as silver birch and rowan, will be planted to create a screen for the fencing along the ditch. If funding allows, a culvert will be made over the ditch/burn and a water feature added, such as a pond, at the junction of the ditch and the burn. If constructed this water feature will be behind the deer fencing and within the Memorial Wood boundary to ensure no water hazard is accessible to visitors and children, etc. Shrubs can be grown, possibly with the involvement of local school children, around the picnic area, and sold on at a later date to raise funds. Alan stressed that the main goal of the project is environmental improvement.

Janice Murray enquired whether the Memorial Wood saplings have survived. Alan reported that most of them have so far, but inevitably some will be lost. He proposed planting some of the spare saplings on the far side of the burn where the ground is not as good, to increase density and mitigate any losses.

8. GDPR/Community Email/Policies Review

Alan reported that the child protection, equalities and health and safety policies have been updated but that these and other policies and documents need to be coordinated and stored in one place. He stressed the ongoing need to properly categorize, collate and file all documents pertaining to the Centre, and to digitise what is necessary. Sandra proposed purchasing a laptop to keep all the files in one place, rather than a memory stick, which can become corrupted. Alan added that a laptop might be necessary for the operation of the audio-visual equipment and would look into whether this is affordable.

9. CPR and Defibrillator Training

Deborah is looking into this. Audrey added that the Community Council is also looking into it.

10. AOB

Andrea reported that Malcolm McGregor, head teacher of Glencoe and St. Bride's Primary Schools, had contacted her to ask if the schools could use the hall as a toilet/health and safety point on April 1st, from 10-1, as they are doing a sponsored cycle from Glenachulish to Cuil Bay. Everyone agreed to this.

Members discussed the possibilities of reviving some of the sports clubs that existed in the past, such as badminton, or soft ball.

Next Meeting

The next meeting has been provisionally set for 12th April at 7pm.