

## ***Aultbea Hall Management Committee***

Tuesday 14 January

19.00 hrs.

- I. Andy wished everyone a 'Happy New Year'.
- II. Attendees: Andy (Chair); Colin B; Joyce; Pauline; Kerry Ann (Zoom); Colin I (Zoom); Bruce; Fee; Jean, Jen (Zoom); Heather (Zoom).
- III. **Existing Business**
  - a) Financial Position - Bruce had circulated the income and expenditure figures for 2024 to end December. These serve also as the 'end of year' accounts for our AGM/OSCR reports. Our Independent Examiner signed them off on 12 January. There is a very healthy balance. However, it was noted that a £5K donation is restricted to the future work for improving the access (Phase III) and that there is still considerable expenditure to complete the Phase II works (electrical installations and joinery), much of which will be from our own match-funding commitment. Expenditure in December included settlement of the frequently amended electricity bill for the whole year. January, to date, has seen full payment of the GAMS donation towards the disabled access works and prompt payment of hall hire costs. The fee for amendment of the Building Warrant application has been paid.
  - b) Funding Applications - Various reports are due to funders as soon as Phase II work is complete. NHI will then accept a further application for funding support this year, provided their criteria can be met. The contract for the external landscaping to improve access, as provided for the GAMS donation, stipulates completion by 28 February. This is already well underway.
  - c) Minor Works - The installation of thermostatically controlled tubular heaters seems to have resolved the long-ongoing issue of serious condensation, to our relief. Colin will replace the yellow/black taping on the stairs in due course.
  - d) IT and media - Over and beyond routine updates, Jen is looking forward to being able to post about the surge in repair and renovation activity in the Hall over the past few days.
  - e) Fundraising & Events - There has been correspondence with the Arctic Convoy Museum curator, and Andy has also been in discussion with both the secretary and chairman of RACM, about possibilities for the anniversary of VE Day. However, given that there is no additional national bank holiday, and no sign of specific funding support, any activities will have to be self-financing. Working on the assumption, which now seems more possible, that the Building Control checks are completed and that the Public Entertainment Licence has come through, RACM are welcome to book our facilities for any events they wish to organise to commemorate the occasion. If necessary, our regular bookings will be suspended to enable them to do this (as per our *Conditions of Let*). Discussion took place on when best to hold our own 'opening event', taking into account the availability of a band, and the timing of Easter and bank holidays. (Note: after the meeting and further consideration, it was agreed that we will organise this for the end of May bank holiday weekend, not the one in early May.) We will need to apply for a liquor licence.

There have been further T-shirt sales. Heather's offer to investigate the cost of, and potential sponsorship for, an Aultbea Hall tote bag, was gratefully accepted. Although there wasn't a big attendance, everyone who came enjoyed the Festive Fun and it was good to see families taking advantage of the Hall facilities.

- f) Community engagement/use of Hall - We confirmed 11 March for the 2025 AGM. Pauline will progress the necessary arrangements and paperwork. She intends to submit the Gift Aid claim for 2024 in the near future.
- g) Risk assessments/volunteer coordination - Jean reminded everyone of the need for relevant risk assessments to be in place as volunteers return to support contractors with the work now in full swing in the Hall. Jean also suggested that we submit the necessary PAT reports and Safeguarding Policy to Highland Council now to help progress our fulfilling of the requirements for the Public Entertainment Licence, and to ensure that there are no issues whilst we await the electrical safety and Completion certificates also required.
- h) Procurement - After a deluge of paperwork, the electricity bills have been paid to end November. Joyce will continue to submit monthly meter readings.

#### IV. **Phase II**

- i) We are delighted that both the electrician and the joiner resumed work on the Hall in the second week of January and speedy progress is being made. Almost all the fire doors have now been fitted and the installation of lighting, heating and sockets is imminent. Andy will confirm location and further details, e.g. of fire door signage, with the electrician later this week. Colin explained what is intended to make the stage area safe, which was endorsed.
- ii) The wood required for the essential ceiling repairs has been itemised and a quote received. Once the details are confirmed, this will be processed as quickly as possible. Colin will make arrangements for the work to be undertaken.
- iii) Wood for the benching will be purchased at the same time, though it is not essential for this work to be completed for Building Control purposes.

#### V. **Any Other Business**

- i) Fee will ask Lyall about issues which various committee members are experiencing with the webmail as set up. It is not always syncing mobile phone with laptops, resulting in emails being 'lost', or not visible on both.
- ii) Kerry Ann confirmed that Bualnaluib School are aware of the potential for VE Day recognition, but there is nothing specific decided yet. We could offer the walls of the *Crow's Nest* as a display space, if that were of interest to them.

#### VI. The **next Committee meeting** will be on Tuesday 4 February, 7pm.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 20.15 hrs.