

Aultbea Hall Management Committee

Tuesday 10 June 2025

19.00 hrs.

- I. Andy welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- II. Attendees: Andy (Chair); Pauline; Bruce; Kerry Ann; Colin I; Fee; Jean; Heather (Zoom).
Apologies: Colin B; Joyce; Jen.
- III. **Existing Business**
 - a) Financial Position - Bruce had circulated the financial figures for May 2025. With two grants (final instalment of the CRF and NHI's contribution to the external painting) having been received, the balance looks healthy but there are insurance and electricity bills imminent, and no payments have yet been made for the painting. A form has been received from Highland Council to revalidate our status for relief from business rates. Pauline will complete and return this.
 - b) Funding Applications - All matters relating to the Community Regeneration Grant via Highland Council have now been finalised, leaving only the North Highland Initiative grant to be managed.
 - c) Minor Works - Three more keys have been cut and distributed. The repairs have been made to the damaged external concrete, and power-washing undertaken to enable the painting to commence. Additional items have been purchased for the First Aid kit.
 - d) Ongoing works - A quotation has been received from a structural engineer for changing the steel support installation in order to remove the four diagonals. We will discuss further at our next meeting, monitoring any issues that arise from the current structure. The magnolia-coloured, oil-based external paint is proving difficult to source. Should it not be available before the end of the month, then Jean will investigate other options to ensure that the work is completed in line with the schedule agreed with the funders.
 - e) Midsummer Dance - The Public Entertainment Licence was received just in time to progress with the planned 20 June dance. No queries were raised nor revised documentation requested. The application for an Occasional Liquor Licence has been submitted, together with a renewed Fire Risk Assessment, and is expected to be granted by 17 June at the latest. Andy is waiting for further clarification as to the conditions for further applications. In the longer term, it may be advisable for two volunteers to hold Personal Liquor Licences. Both Heather and Colin I. expressed willingness, should we decide this would be useful for organising future events. Jean's drafts for event-related Risk Assessments, Fire Evacuation plans, task sheets for fire stewards and an updated Health and Safety Policy were all endorsed and will be made available online/in folders/to stewards as required. Various arrangements were discussed with respect to the event, including stewarding, entry and purchases of stock for the bar.
 - f) IT and media - Jen continues to post frequent updates, currently T-shirt ventures across the world and the Midsummer Dance. Various website documentation is being updated, given the Hall is now open, and policies and risk assessments are being amended accordingly.

- g) Fundraising - T-shirts continue to find buyers.
Future events, including the Flotilla, will be discussed at the next meeting.
- h) Community engagement/use of Hall - Feedback from the open afternoon has been circulated. It was agreed that the main Hall would benefit from curtains and a generous donation has been offered towards the costs, once they have been estimated. Other suggestions made will depend on community volunteers coming forward to organise the activities suggested.
As well as being the venue for the highly successful VE Day Celebration lunch organised by Poppy Scotland volunteers, the just re-opened Hall has been used for badminton and a much-welcomed Babies to Bairns afternoon. It is hoped that the latter will continue on a monthly basis. We anticipate regular bookings from Bualnaluib School after the summer holidays.
Jean and Kerry Ann will check the new PVG regulations to ensure that we give the right advice to those hiring our facilities.
- i) Procurement - Pauline's request to EDF for a VAT rebate and refund of the Climate Levy elements of our electricity bills since reconnection in 2023 until May 2025 was successful and all bills received for the past two years have been adjusted accordingly. We expect to see the cumulative outcome when we received the electricity invoice for the March-May quarter.
- j) Press release - *The Gairloch & District Times* has published several items relating to the re-opening of the Hall. The *Ross-shire Journal* also printed our full report and included it in their online edition.

IV. Any Other Business

- Following a recommendation from the GDT editor, the Committee agreed that Pauline should submit an application to the Village Inspiration Award. Decisions will be known by the end of October.
- On behalf of parents using the Hall facilities, Kerry Ann proposed that we purchase silicone corner protectors for the wooden dividers. This was agreed. We are also very happy for the Parent Council to store play equipment in the Hall toy cupboard.
- Owing to the non-return of the key to the off-site storage box by one hirer, the next activity organiser was unable to gain access the following morning. It was agreed to place a second key in the storage box. There was also an issue over the cleanliness of the kitchen after the same let, which will be raised should there be a future booking. We may need to amend the conditions of let to add a surcharge to a booking invoice should the premises not be left ready for the next booking. As we do not employ a cleaner, we need to address the broader cleaning requirements, including hoover provision both up- and down-stairs.
- We have been given leaflets for *Mikeysline*. As a principle, we agreed we would accept such materials for distribution/display from charities and community groups, but not from commercial or business interests.
- We will consider how best to post a booking schedule on our website.
- Fee has a contact who may make the clan name plaques for the benches.
- Colin I. has made a spare PA system available for Hall users, which is appreciated.
- Scottish Water have informed us that they will be checking the meter on 2 July.

The **next Committee meeting** will be on 8 July.

There being no other business, the meeting ended at 20.20 hrs.