

Crathes Hall  
Minutes of Trustee Meeting  
Thursday, 23 November 2023

**Attendees:** Neil McHattie, Jen McHattie, John Gaunt, Gillian O’Flynn, Derek Johnson, Joan Willox, Geoff Knight, Sophie Wright, Jac Elliott, Bert McIntosh

**Apologies:** Ann-Marie Steel, Tom Clarke,

**Review of previous minutes:** Minutes of previous meeting on 4 September 2023 was proposed as a correct record by John Gaunt and seconded by Derek Johnson.

**Financial Update:** John Gaunt presented ‘Financial report to Trustees 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2023 (copy attached)

- Both hall and redevelopment account have positive balances after all current works paid for

**Refurbishment Update**

- Heating Control System
  - Now installed - allows for remote monitoring and control of heating system to avoid excessive bills due to unnecessary adjustment of temperature or timings by hall users.
  - Currently being tested by John.
  - App will be extended to other Trustees shortly
- External painting – Confirmed early 2024, when weather improves
- Solar panel proposal

- Discussed benefits of installation of solar panels and batteries
- Likely cost savings to be realised in 4 years
- CARES funding available for 80% of cost (estimated up to 30k.
- Remaining 20% of cost could potentially be sourced via other funding opportunities, including survey and roof inspection costs via Meikle Carewe Wind Farm community benefit fund
- 3 quotes have already been received and John detailed proposed measures to be installed
- Board approved all proposed measures and agreed unanimously to proceed with CARES funding application
- What's next – Kitchen Refurbishment?
  - Mould issue in kitchen highlighted. Agreed that investigation works required to identify source of damp and what future measures required to rectify problem.
  - Council Community funding opportunity (approx. 32k) discussed. Initial communication with the Council suggested that funding would be available for projects that benefited the hall/community and increased usability.
  - Board agreed to explore kitchen upgrade funding opportunities
  - Bert raised power restriction issues if additional electrical supply was required for potential kitchen upgrade. Discussed that unlikely that equipment would be any more than oven for heating of food,

however, agreed that restrictions should be investigated and clarified.

### **Station Wood Update and Hedging Scope**

- Geoff updated Board on tree thinning, hedging and fencing progress. Funds available approx. 4.5k
  - 2 quotes for tree thinning being pursued. Initial proposed start date delayed due to delay in getting the required permit
- Geoff sourcing hedging costs
  - Geoff advised that main cost was in supply of guards
  - Geoff discussed option of installing temporary fencing in lieu of guards. Board discussed and agreed that guards better protection against rabbits
  - Bert investigating supply of guards from other source at more competitive price
  - Geoff proposed hedging from top of carpark to field and fencing along carpark edge to avoid making carpark too secluded
- Acknowledged again that Blackhall Fencing very kindly installing fencing free of charge. Graham Blackhall proposing to carry out works during Xmas break.

### **Hall signage**

- We have funding to spend on signage (GBP500)
- Board agreed to investigate option of large rock with engraved or other lettering 'Crathes Hall'
  - Bert offered to provide rock

- Jen investigation lettering options
- Proposed flag to advertise ‘Fly’ – Jen investigating options/pricing
- Neil looking into getting Council community sign
- Agreed that notice board to be moved away from entrance and placed at front door

### **Outside lighting – street light replacement, other suggestions**

- NTS/Council contacted Board re. proposed use of carpark for storing trees removed from behind hall as part of street lighting upgrade works. Board expressed concerns about log storage restricting carpark capacity and being a potential safety issue. Neil to follow up with Council representative
- Council will remove, at their expense, the lamp post just inside carpark entrance during upgrade works as it is connected to the main road lighting
- There will be a new streetlight installed on the main road just outside the entrance to the hall as part of the upgrade works.
- Board discussed lighting requirements in carpark as currently there is none, plus additional security light at road-side fire exit
- Bert suggested 4m high light in the middle of the carpark
- Derek investigating carpark lighting options to establish best course of action
- Bert also raised issue of heavy goods vehicles potentially using carpark during trip breaks and proposed the addition

of a 'No heavy Vehicle' sign at the entrance. Neil to investigate.

### **Review of 16/18 year old party policy**

- Current wording re. teenage parties to be removed
- Hall policy document to be updated (Jac and Joan to review)

### **OSCR Requirements**

- Purchasing process and hall debit card
  - Accounts have been audited by an accountant and submitted by John for past financial year
  - John noted that the purchasing process would benefit from being streamlined in order to meet OSCR reporting requirements
    - Debit card to be obtained to use for all hall related purchases. Card to be allocated to Joan and Jen. If any purchases required, Joan or Jen to be contacted.
    - Pay in slips are now to be completed and signed by 2 Trustees for all funds received. Blank pay in slips can be found in the hall kitchen for use as required.
- Potential role for Bookkeeper with reporting experience – Board asked to contact John if they knew of any potential candidates?

### **Upcoming fundraising or other events**

- Wreath making – 2 events confirmed, 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> December

- New Year's Ceilidh sold out – Jen confirmed she'd be delighted to organise the 'closest coin to bottle' fundraiser.

**2024 duty roster** – Joan will issue first draft shortly. Trustees to respond back confirming agreement or otherwise.

### **New trustees required**

- The Board acknowledged the unfortunate departure of 3 current Trustees and thanks them for their contribution:
  - Gillian will leave end of January 2024
  - Ann-Marie will leave end of December 2023.
  - Tom has recently left the Board
- Neil to be contacted with names of potential replacement Trustees

### **AOB**

- 200 club
  - Joan to take over 200 club from Ann-Marie
  - Winners will be drawn at each 'Fly'
- Gillian organising block out foam pads for round windows

**Date of next meeting – TBA**