

GLENURQUHART RURAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

MONDAY 18^h JUNE 2018

OPEN MEETING

Present: Susan Clark (SC) Chair, Carolyn Wilson (CW) Secretary, Nicola Vestey (NV) Treasurer and 18 others

Apologies: 5 apologies were received.

Full list of attendees and apologies is attached as Appendix A

1. Previous minutes and matters arising:

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2018 had been available for scrutiny by members. The minutes had been approved; proposed by Gordon Watson and seconded by Gordon Findlay.

There were no matters arising, not separately covered by the agenda

2. Shinty Club:

The Shinty Club had contacted GURCA to request agreement to their proposal to extend the hard standing area towards the pavilion. SC showed the proposed plan. There was unanimous agreement to approve the proposal.

3. Loch Ness Homes parkland:

Gordon Watson updated the meeting on progress. The draft Heads of Terms have been submitted to our lawyer for comment. It is hoped that a meeting with LNH can be arranged in July, as we are fast approaching the point where a decision on whether or not to accept the offer of this land must be made.

GW will keep the GURCA Board informed of progress.

4. TIC and Urquhart Castle

Following the Public meeting in May, and subsequent voting, the 2 potential projects for community involvement in the ownership/management of the TIC and Urquhart Castle Visitor Centre are being further investigated.

Separate Working Groups have been established for the two projects, and draft Terms of Reference for the Groups drawn up. The groups will report back to the GURCA Board on a regular basis. The TIC group is to have its first meeting later in June, and the Castle group will meet in July.

SC again emphasised that without sufficient volunteers to allow the Working Groups to explore options and produce reports, the projects would not go further. Anyone wishing to be involved in either of the Working Groups – regardless of their views on the proposals – would be welcome as GURCA was keen to ensure that the options are explored as thoroughly and fairly as possible.

5. Community Action Plan

SC summarised progress.

Funding of £5k by Soirbheas had been confirmed. However, our application for Lottery funding had been declined, so a £9k funding gap remains to be closed before the Action Plan consultation work can be given the go ahead.

Jennie Macfie suggested Postcode Lottery as a source of funding and it was agreed that she would look into this with Gordon Findlay.

SC would also speak to HIE.

ACTION – Jennie Macfie/ Gordon Findlay and SC. Report back to next meeting

6. Hall transfer update:

CW advised the meeting that the legal transfer of the hall to GURCA was now moving forward, having suffered significant delay due to the poor advice received from Harper Macleod at the start of the process. A formal 'Charity Reorganisation' request had been lodged with OSCR and has now been openly listed by OSCR for any views. Once the consultation period closes, at the end of June, it is hoped that OSCR's approval will be forthcoming within 3 months. Subject to OSCR approval, the legal transfer can then be effected and all the relevant documentation is in place for this.

It is hoped that this process can be concluded by autumn.

7. COBEN / Local Energy Plan (LEP):

The consultation work on the LEP has now been concluded and Soirbheas will be hosting a launch of this on Saturday 29th September at Glenurquhart Public Hall.

The exciting potential project for the use of waste water heat transfer capability, to provide heat for the hall and Glenurquhart Centre is ongoing. Funding was secured to undertake the initial feasibility study and check land title, and also to produce a short video about the proposal and how it would fit with our community. The video was actually shown at a recent conference in Brussels!

GURCA has now applied to Local Energy Scotland for funding to allow this scheme to be further developed.

8. Market on the Green:

SC reported that after 2 trial events, with just 2 stalls, the most recent market had 8 stalls and was very successful. The next event will have 12 stalls.

This initiative has been conceived and managed entirely by Marj Tate and Karen Price, and has already raised £230 for GURCA, through stall fees, with more to come through the summer. The markets are proving very popular and are an asset to the village. One stall holder has suggested a Christmas event, which is also being considered.

SC wished to record GURCA's thanks to Marj and Karen for their initiative and energy in running these markets, and raising valuable funding for GURCA in the process. The income from the markets will probably cover GURCA's costs of this year's grass cutting.

9. Games stand:

There will be a joint Hall / Gurca stall again at this year's Highland Gathering. The format will be a tombola style, and any donated prizes will be gratefully received. Prizes can be anything – including items suitable for children.

Jan and Alan Bell will coordinate the collection of prizes.

Volunteers to man the stand for a period of time on Games day will be welcome. Please advise Jan or Alan bell, or Carolyn Wilson, if you are willing to spend some time on the stall.

10. Asset Valuation:

Grant funding was obtained to allow a professional valuation of the hall, as part of the legal transfer process. SC sought approval from the meeting for the residual funds to be used to obtain valuations of the green and Blairbeg Park. This would allow more accurate financial accounting in future.

The proposal was unanimously agreed.

11. GURCA website:

The Board believes it is increasingly desirable for GURCA to have its own website, which could be used as a genuine community 'go to' asset, as well as being of practical value for keeping records of meetings, GURCA information etc.

We have discussed this with Soirbheas, who have invited us to make an application for funding. We have obtained estimated costs, and SC asked whether anyone would care to assist with the funding application? Please speak to Carolyn Wilson if you are willing to help.

12. Community Resilience Plan:

CW advised the meeting that despite previous optimism, we had not yet got the necessary electrical connections installed at the hall to allow SSE to provide a temporary generator in the event of an extended loss of power. CW will talk to the electrician this week to try and get a firm date for the work.

Once the fittings were complete, CW intended to convene a Meeting of the Resilience Committee to review the plan, and make any necessary amendments.

13. Membership:

CW confirmed that GURCA now had around 225 members, which is very encouraging. However, we had not quite managed to reach our target of 500 members, so members are asked to continue in their efforts to make friends and neighbours aware of GURCA and what membership means. Many people still fear

that joining GURCA will mean they have commitments to meetings etc, which is not the case.

13 AOB:

- **Jan Bell concerns.** Jan Bell addressed the meeting to explain her concerns about the range of issues GURCA has become involved in since its constitution was amended to a two tier SCIO last year. She felt the Association was trying to 'run before it could walk' and believed that it should focus on the most important issue of taking ownership of the hall and obtaining funding for its renovation. This was the main reason for the change to GURCA's constitution. The Board should also bear in mind that there was a requirement to raise sufficient funds each year for existing commitments.

SC thanked Mrs Bell for her input and agreed that the hall was an extremely important issue. The delays to the process of transferring ownership had been due to poor legal advice, and were very frustrating for both the Hall Committee and GIRCA. However, the transfer was now being progressed, and as soon as it was complete, GURCA would be making serious funding applications to try and take the renovation project forward.

CW added that the various opportunities that had arisen in the past year, for the community to become more involved in the ownership / management of local assets, had not been actively sought out by the GURCA board. The timing of the opportunities was genuinely coincidental. As a two tier SCIO, GURCA **was** a suitable entity to take on such ownership. However, the Board had been very careful not to make autonomous decisions as to whether or not to progress the schemes. This was why the Public Meeting in May had been held.

In concluding, SC hoped to reassure Mrs Bell that the hall was very much at the forefront of the GURCA Board's priorities.

- **Children's parties.** Karen Mackenzie asked about the process to obtain Disclosure for the new party organisers, once confirmed. Advised that Anne Macdonald was the contact for this, but whilst she is away, Sheila at the Care centre would probably be able to provide the relevant paperwork.
- **Heritage group WW1 event.** Jan Bell reminded the meeting about the World War 1 event that the Heritage Group will be holding at the hall on the 9th and 10th of November, and she asked that anyone with any memorabilia they would be willing to share (whether or not pertaining to local individuals) should contact her as soon as possible
- **Data protection** .CW confirmed that GURCA's policy on data protection would be an item for the proposed website. Meanwhile, all correspondence to members was being sent out anonymously, and new members are being asked to confirm their preferences regarding mailing. No information is shared with any outside party, and the only use for it is to allow information to be

distributed. All present at the meeting confirmed they did not object to their names appearing on the attendees list with the minutes.

- **Community Forest.** Neil Macinnes brought to the meeting's attention the fact that a consultation event regarding Balmacaan Woods was to take place at the hall on Monday 25th June between 4 and 7 pm, and he urged people to attend if possible and make known their views.
- **smile.amazon** Nicola Vestey advised the meeting that she had enrolled GURCA on smile.amazon.co.uk. Anyone using this site to purchase anything that they would normally buy on Amazon's normal site, can nominate a charity (and GURCA is now on their nominated charities list) and amazon will donate 0.5% of the net price to that charity. However from June 15th to 29th they will donate 1.5%. Members were asked to consider this if they were to use amazon for any future purchases

The next Open meeting date is Monday 3rd September at 8pm, Glenurquhart Public Hall

Appendix A

GURCA meeting 18th June 2018: List of attendees and Apologies

Attendees:

Susan Clark

Carolyn Wilson

Nicola Vestey

Erik Trelfer

Gordon Findlay

Jan Bell

Alan Bell

Fiona Urquhart

Mhairi Marshall

Gordon Watson

Karen Mackenzie

Elizabeth Owen

Helen Maclennan

Neil Macinnes

Ann Macinnes

Leona Joiner

Darren Reid

Dick Beach

Fraser Mackenzie

Jennie Macfie

Adrian Varwell

Apologies

Pam Lucas, Margaret Varwell, Anne Macdonald, Margaret Crichton, George Cruikshank