

# GLENURQUHART RURAL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

MONDAY 21<sup>st</sup> JUNE 2021

## OPEN MEETING

**Present:** Susan Clark (SC) Chair, Carolyn Wilson (CW) Secretary, Monique Riddle (Treasurer), Gordon Findlay, Miranda Service, Dot MacKenzie, Jan Bell, Alan Bell, Fraser Mackenzie, Anne Macdonald, Ron Fraser, Pam Lucas, Dianne Fraser, Sandra Bardwell, Christine Hart, Andy Lloyd, Garry Macintosh, Erik Trelfer and Gordon Watson

### 1. Previous minutes and matters arising:

The minutes of the previous Open meeting, held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021, were approved, proposed by Gordon Watson and seconded by Fraser Mackenzie.

#### Matters arising:

- Blairbeg Park – GURCA members had been advised of the request by Glen Urquhart Shinty Club for a long term lease of the park, and an online vote had been held, with the result being an overwhelming majority in favour of GURCA negotiating a suitable lease with GUSC.
- Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan – GURCA had submitted a response to this document, incorporating members' views.
- Old Shop Site – GURCA had advised members when the planning application was submitted, so that they could comment if they wished.

There were no outstanding actions from the previous minutes.

### 2. Financial Report:

Monique Riddle reported that so far this financial year, the accounts have been quiet, compared to last year when we saw a huge level of income and expenditure because of Covid funding, and handling Loch Ness Hub transactions.

We are already seeing income from the Markets on the Green, which is very welcome.

Looking ahead, Monique has been discussing with SC how we might start to budget more effectively, as we begin to receive rental income from Loch Ness Hub and, potentially, have staff to account for, if the funding bid to DTAS (Development Trust Association Scotland) for a Development Officer is approved.

### 3. Blairbeg Park Lease to Glenurquhart Shinty Club:

SC confirmed that negotiations between GURCA and GUSC, regarding a long term lease of the park to the Shinty Club, are ongoing. A meeting is scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> June to discuss the parties' comments on the draft lease.

#### **4. Glenurquhart Public Hall:**

Gordon Watson gave an update on the hall redevelopment project.

As mentioned in the earlier AGM, GURCA has applied to DTAS for funding for a Development Officer to identify potential use of the hall's spare capacity, and set up and coordinate such activities. This will tie in with the aims set out in the revised Business Plan for the hall, which focusses on Heritage, Well Being and Business partnerships, as well as the actual infrastructure of the building.

Unfortunately, post Brexit and Covid, the costs for the project have risen significantly. In response to a question from Garry Mackintosh, Gordon confirmed that the likely cost of the project was now closer to £1m than the £750k previously assumed.

The Project team has started to make new funding applications, with a view to undertaking work in Summer 2022 if successful.

#### **5. Local woodland:**

Gordon Watson advised the meeting that GURCA had been made aware of several parcels of woodland, owned by Angus McKay, which were being marketed for sale. These include the plot of land adjacent to the Public Hall. It had been suggested that GURCA might seek to identify funding to allow the purchase and ongoing management of this woodland, and thereby retain green space in the village for the benefit of the community. GURCA Trustees had discussed this matter and were in favour of asking members to confirm their support for such a project.

The view of those present was sought and there was unanimous support for taking this forward.

The next step will be for an online poll of members to be arranged as soon as possible. Meanwhile, funding options are being explored, so if members are in favour of seeking to purchase the woodland, we will be better placed to act.

#### **6. Notice Boards:**

SC suggested that the various notice boards in our area would benefit from each being adopted by an individual (a notice board 'buddy') who would take responsibility for ensuring out of date notices were removed, sufficient pins were available for notices, and maintenance issues were raised in a timely manner. She asked members who were willing to 'adopt' a notice board to let her, or Carolyn, know. Several of those present volunteered to take on boards.

<b>Noticeboard</b>	<b>Volunteer</b>
West Lewiston	Sandra Bardwell
Old Shop site	Anne Fraser
Enrick Crescent	Gordon Watson
Hall	Josie Mackenzie
Hub Car Park	Christine Hart
Milton	Dot MacKenzie
Balnain	tbc
Corrimony	tbc

## **7. AEDs:**

GURCA has about £400 left in its restricted AED (Defibrillator) account. The AED at the fire station has recently had its battery changed, at a cost of £250.00 and GURCA has been approached to assist with this cost. The meeting agreed that this sum should be paid from the restricted account.

However, Carolyn Wilson pointed out that there appears to have been no longer term funding plan put in place to allow for such maintenance in the future, and there is no specific group with 'ownership' of the AEDs which were purchased as a community venture when funding was available. CW will speak to Soirbheas who have also queried this matter, and advise that the restricted fund within GURCA is almost depleted, and suggest a strategy for future management is required.

## **8. AOB:**

Constitution amendments – SC advised the meeting that she had been discussing the existing constitution in relation to lodging any requests under the Community Right to Buy legislation. The team at CRTB have suggested that several amendments to the constitution would be required for GURCA to be eligible to register interest. The proposed amendments are set out in Appendix 1.

The meeting voted and agreed unanimously that the changes should be drafted and the Board of Trustees could approve the amended constitution if in agreement.

POST MEETING NOTE – a postal / email vote on this matter must be offered to all members and this will be done before any changes are effected (subject to members' approval in accordance with the Constitution)

Old Shop site – Garry Mackintosh wished it to be recorded that he was disappointed with the approach taken by Highland Housing Alliance to the planning application for flats on the site of the old shop. SC for GURCA and Dianne Fraser for Glenurquhart Community Council, both confirmed that their organisations had submitted objections to the proposal, and had also been disappointed by HHA's unwillingness to take on board any of the points raised to them during informal consultation in advance of the application being lodged.

## Appendix 1

### Proposed amendments to GURCA's Constitution

Clause 4 will have the word 'main' added to the final sentence, and will now read as follows:

4. The SCIO's purposes are to benefit the community of Glen Urquhart which comprises the Glen Urquhart Community Council area ("the Community") with the following objects:

4.1 The advancement of community development (including the advancement of rural regeneration) within the Community;

4.2 The advancement of education

4.3 The advancement of citizenship

4.4 The advancement of environmental protection or improvement

4.5 The provision of recreational facilities, or the organisation of recreational activities, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the persons for whom the facilities or activities are primarily intended.

But only to the extent that the above purposes are consistent with the main purpose of furthering the achievement of sustainable development.

Clause 17a and b: 'ordinarily' to be removed (to make it clear that an individual must be resident in our defined boundary and registered to vote to be an Ordinary Member)

Clause 17c: to be removed, (to avoid any mechanism for subjective assessment of membership applications by the board)

Clause 18: 'ordinarily' to be removed (to make it clear an Associate member does not live within our defined boundary)

Clause 20: 'ordinarily' to be removed (to make it clear a Junior member is defined by age, regardless of where they live)

Clause 28: to be added "any individual applicant meeting the criteria set out in clauses 17, 18 or 20, or organisation meeting the criteria set out in clause 18, must be granted membership" (to make it clear that the board's acceptance of membership applications cannot be subjective).

Clause 29: 'members of the Community' to be added (to make it clear that at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of total members must live within our defined boundary)

Clause 59: the quorum for a members' meeting to be increased to 12

Clause 89: the minimum number of Trustees to be increased to 5

Clause 125: to be amended to make a quorum at a board meeting at least 50% of the total number of Trustees.

New clause 160, with a commitment to inform the Scottish Ministers of any changes to the Clauses