

JOHN RAE SOCIETY TRUSTEE MEETING

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON SUNDAY 15th SEPTEMBER 2019 19.00hrs
AT THE POMONA INN, FINSTOWN

PRESENT: Andrew Appleby, Norman Shearer, Anna Elmy, Neil Kermode, Fiona Lettice, James Chalmers, Fiona Gould, David Reid

APOLOGIES: Mark Newton

IN ATTENDANCE: Sandra Deans, James Grieve

INITIALS IN BOLD DENOTE ACTION TO BE TAKEN.

1. Feasibility Report

The Chairperson opened proceedings and explained that this meeting was called specifically to discuss and ratify the final Hall of Clestrain Feasibility Report commissioned by the Society, back in March 2019. The report was received in August, much later than the promised completion date of June. The Hall Committee met on the 20th Aug to discuss the report. The general conclusion was that the report was not to the standard expected but was commensurate with the fee charged. The report had been reviewed by Architectural Heritage Fund and no concern was raised over the actual content provided.

The Chairperson ran through the main points of the feasibility report.

The Project Manager let the trustees know that she had met with one of the consultants on Sat 14th Sept to talk through suggested amendments to the report. The major change was that the outbuilding running along the garden wall should be either maintained or a replacement included in the plans. It was felt it was a useful storage and maintenance/implement storage space. Accordingly, it was agreed that the plans and associated costs would be adjusted but reassurance wasn't given for suggested amendments to other sections of the report. **SD to send her comments for consideration.**

Concern was raised over the potential overlap of Arctic Centre ambitions with the Innovation Centre, Stromness. The trustees were informed that JRS ambitions had been raised both by email and in meetings with those organisations involved with the Innovation Centre development. Apart from Conference facilities, there were no other concerns raised by either organisation. The Innovation Centre will offer a much large conference facility (up to 80 persons). To date, HIE have been very supportive with JRS adopting the Arctic Centre direction.

In terms of Interpretation, the Project Manger updated the trustee's on potential collaborations with the island's academic institutions and that interest had been shown in working with the Society in a number of ways, including developing interpretation story lines using digital outputs such as virtual and augmented reality. With an interesting development in potential shared VR experiences.

The trustees were keen to know the planned course of action for the next funding phase of the project. Please see details in section 4.

NS proposed that the Society should accept the Feasibility Report and AA seconded it. The trustee's agreed that they should accept the Feasibility Report and make full payment accordingly. **NS/FL to progress.**

2. Action Plan

It was advised that preparing a Heritage Lottery expression of interest (EOI) and an application to Architectural Heritage Fund was a priority. The next step would be to run up a Development Grant application for AHF which is due on the 11th Oct.

The development grants are for project development costs and only includes work that is essential to the project, prior to construction.

3 competitive quotes are required for each item of work costing over £10K. Payments are retrospective.

The trustees formally agreed that the project should be progressed and that they would support applications made to the relevant funders including the Architectural Heritage Fund, Community Development Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Environment Scotland. They were keen to investigate funding opportunities with the Robertson Trust as well.

Trustee's agreed that funding applications to other smaller sources should be considered. **AA and SD to follow up.**

3. AOB

a. Constitution

It was recommended that the Constitution should be rewritten, recognising the Society's ownership of and proposed developments for the Hall of Clestrain. **ALL THE TRUSTEE'S were asked to review the constitution prior to the 2019 AGM**, where any amendments would be agreed. A copy of the constitution detailing potential additions and deletions has been sent out. It was suggested that there should be a separate advert announcing the AGM, with an article to sit alongside it, detailing the proposed constitutional changes. It was felt that it might be a good opportunity to include a "call for new trustee's" as well. **NS to progress.**

b. Corporate Membership

A potential grading scheme was drafted for the Society's corporate membership and it was proposed that each business should have a discretionary choice in the level of membership payment. It was suggested the first grade/cost should remain consistent with the existing grade and any current corporate membership should remain as is and Corporate Benefits were asked to be considered. Suggestions were inclusion on Newsletters /Website, Talks provided and email updates. **AA & FG to review grading options and the consider membership benefits for the different levels.**

Concern was expressed over the amount of extra work this would create, which led to a further discussion regarding Admin support

c. **Administrative Support**

Concern was expressed by several Trustee's regarding the lack of administrative support with notice handed in by current administrator, who has kindly agreed to provide support until the next AGM. **SD to check the hourly rate that VAO would charge** for temporary administrative support, until a permanent replacement was found. **SD to also draft a list of potential administrative duties.**

d. **John Rae's Anniversary Celebration 30th September - NS to draft and distribute itinerary.**

e. **Financial Accounts**

Final accounts to be sent to Accountants ensuring final accounts were ready for the AGM. **FL to progress**

f. **AGM**

The date of the next AGM was agreed as the 27th October 2019. **NS booked Pomona Inn.**

g. **Date of Next Meeting**

AGM - Sunday 27th October, 7pm at Pomona Inn, Finstown.

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