**Draft Unst Partnership Board Meeting minutes**

**7pm, Wednesday 24th March 2021 by Zoom**

**Present:** Gordon Thomson, Sarah McBurnie, George Rodger, Joan Bailey, Di Hervey, Colin Edwards-Horton, Susan Edwards-Horton, Frances Browne, Peter Sandison.

**Welcome & Apologies:** Apologies from June Harrison, Kathleen Johnson.

**Matters arising from last Minutes**

The Fair Food fund now stood at £2690 and would last until about May. Further funding may be available from VAS after then. Still only possible to fund electricity through keycard.

**Recycling Project**

Peter reported on recent activity. He had spoken to Ellis Keith and Vic Thomas at Nesting Scrapstore who had been very helpful. It had taken 4 years to get their project going. They had bought the local school from Sic and completely converted it inside and an extension to create an admin area and secondhand shop. We were maybe one year into our project.

Rona at COPE had also been helpful, as were Helen Currie and Rene at Bute, an island of similar size with recycling projects going on.

Peter hoped to visit Turriefield and Northmavine next week.

Peter was part way through a two day “Introduction to Professional fundraising” course online.

Survey returns had been slow to come through. There was a discussion on how to improve this – emailing electronic copies, message in Times column and Facebook page.

Frances said that NILP (North Isles Learning Partnership) was keen on art and craft workshops e.g. using recycled plastic, similar to “Art out of Rubbish” classes run by Shetland Museum. These were suggested as ways of encouraging families and bairns to get involved.

Other suggestions included dolls houses made out of cabinets and film shows.

We had maybe pitched the Centre as a place for older retired people too much - when really anyone might run a course for any age group.

From replies so far, the outdoor gardening aspect was proving popular.

**Skip day**

Next skip Day was on Saturday, 27th March. A few pickups required. Sarah and Chris would be going out with trailers. A few local volunteers already recruited.

**Shop report**

Kathleen sent shop figures. March income was £1428 with 289 through the door. We had been closed January and February so a March “surge” was to be expected. Online sales have also helped.

Overall figures are £30,354 since September 2018 with 9695 people through door, a great achievement. Income over 30 months is roughly £1000 per month, although we were closed for 5 months due to Covid so it works out more like £1200 per month.

We will soon have our 10,000th customer so will try to have a reward for that person.

We are still disposing of items that cannot sell to COPE, Nesting Scrapstore or, if all else fails, to the waste disposal plant at Rova Head. It might be that we could sell books through Amazon or Ebay **(Sarah).** Toys were popular and were the sort of thing that can be passed on when bairns had grown past them.

**Financial report**

The bank balance today was £38,721.99. We have a bill to pay for our Legal costs at Hagdale although the bulk of that has been paid. The agreement has been signed and we will shortly own the land. There is a 7 year return clause; if we have not used the land by then, the Show Committee can buy it back.

Money is due to us from NTS for overseeing contract work at Halligarth. We have received Business Support payments from SIC/HIE but that has now ended. We have a claim to go to the Crown Estate for the Recycling Project expenses in Feb/March. This grant money is only paid out in arrears.

We have money in reserve for 2 more Skip days and the Fair Food fund.

Taking the above into account our balance is probably closer to £40K.

**AOCB**

Given the amount in our unreserved funds, we spoke about possible purchase of polycrubs in order to get something going on the land at Hagdale. Depending on size and number, this would be about £6000 for one or £12K for two. A water supply system would also be required.

If we had a “cash crop” or crops, they could start to generate some income.

The alternative was to wait and buy the polycrubs with grant aid.

Frances mentioned Emma Perring and the Fair Food strategy who might be able to assist. They are keen to support local growing initiatives. Transition Turriefield had already been up to Unst last March and are keen to encourage local growers too.

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 21st April, 7pm.**