

Upper Eskdale Development Group

Minutes of meeting: 7th January 2015

Present: Victoria Long, Jennie Mills, Bernard Provost, Sue Company, Nick Jennings, Susie Lilley, Lodro Dorje, Ernie Buck, Jock Miller.

Apologies: Scott McCarthy,

Minutes of the previous meeting: Sue proposed and Jennie seconded to accept the minutes of the previous meeting.

Time limit to meetings: Sue proposed that we set a time limit of 2 hours for the meetings, deciding 15 minutes before the end whether we should carry on or put items onto the next agenda. All agreed.

Matters arising:

Extractor Fan: Adjustments have been made and it is now marginally quieter. The fan will be operated with these adjustments for a period of 6 weeks. If this does not prove to be satisfactory another meeting may need to be held with the architect etc. The planned next step is to put a silencer onto the system. However, we have been told that this may be out-with our entitlement within the contract. We may need to take legal action. We would need a good solicitor and some were proposed. This matter will be reviewed at the next meeting. Before any action of this kind is taken, costs will be looked into.

Shop: Sue has spoken to Gwyn Parry who sells at the Farmers Market in Lockerbie. He is from Annan and sells local produce which is good value for money and fresh. He could supply most vegetables. It was suggested that he could sell in the Hub Shop once a fortnight.

A lady in Waterbeck might be interested in selling meat.

Locals may also want to sell things too.

There is also a person who sells fish who we could approach.

Bread made in the Café kitchen could also be sold.

In summer, vegetables could be sold by locals from their own plots.

It was suggested that we ask for a 10% of sales for use of the space though this was not definitely decided and will be reviewed.

Sue will follow this up and report back.

It was suggested that the Shop be open on Thursday or Friday either weekly or fortnightly.

Although the space would not bring in much income for the Hub, it could serve the needs of the community.

Café / Bar:

Chris Harrison will cover for Martin (on holiday) on the w/es of 10th & 16th January with Tanith's help. There are few visitors to the valley in January and February and few bookings are likely.

Finance report

Jennie (Treasurer) gave a brief breakdown of the takings over the last month.

Publicity

Nick showed the board a graphic of a design for a sign in the form of a blackboard that will be put on the road with signs on both sides. It will be moveable. Andrew Gordon is making an easel for the sign which will be white lettering on black metal.

It was proposed that some publicity be done through Samye Ling. They need to be approached formally and the matter would need to be discussed by the Samye Ling Management Committee.

Event

Jock will be doing a games night on the 16th January: darts, table tennis, and board games. This may continue once a week.

Kitchen Porter: there is a system in place with the work being done between Wolphy Gordon and Louis Laing. They are paid a minimum wage.

Hub Cleaner: Andy Doolan started on 27th December. He has a lot of catering experience and skills. He has already done some extra work in the kitchen. Stanley Wynd is kindly dealing with the legal issues on a volunteer basis.

Public Liability:

This will be in place by the renewal date which is 5th Feb. Most of the liabilities are in place. The Trustees will be named and will be legally liable. The Trustees are the board members.

Staff matters

Staff will be having appraisals using a procedure that has been used by the Dumfries & Galloway University. This gives an opportunity for feedback.

The matter of Nick's retirement arose: the board need to discuss this and how the project would be managed.

Karen is giving a month's notice on Monday 12th since she has the opportunity for promotion in her other job. Her post could subsequently be upgraded to include aspects of management of the Hub. However, it must not be forgotten that our vision for UEDG is much bigger than just the Hub.

It was proposed that there be a staff sub group. This will be: Jennie Mills, Sue Company, Nick Jennings, Ernie Buck and Jock Miller. Remit of sub group: appraisal, job description and being on the selection committee (Human Resources). The first meeting will be 11am, Monday 12th.

The Health Care meeting: health care and council members have been invited to a meeting at the Hub. The doctor can come. We have discussed offering younger people some kind of work experience. However, they have been told that we do not have the resources carry this forward. The meeting is scheduled for Friday 16th at 11am. Those attending will stay for lunch.

Meeting from a local community/user of the Hub: Sue met with Brian Patterson regarding the problems about the lights and the noise from the extractor fan and the cooking smells. The first two items have been either dealt with or are in the process of being resolved as far as is possible. Regarding the cooking smells, Sue informed Brian that there already were charcoal filters in the fan. However, she will contact the manufacturer to find out if more filters can be installed.

Organisation health check opportunity: The Lottery have offered a 'health' check to go over the project in its current stage. A consultant is on offer. Nick felt this was a good opportunity and we agreed that he should go ahead with arranging this.

Land at Twiglees: A plot is being sold with outline planning permission for two houses between the 'farm steadings' and the row of cottages beyond and there are other properties next to the site which will also be for sale. The community has an option to buy it at a low cost as long as it is

development for low cost housing or at an affordable rent. This could give long term benefit to the community. There are ways to secure the funds needed, at as little cost to the community as possible. The Scottish Government quango will offer us support to explore it further. The expression of interest that has already been put forward by UEDG (since there was a deadline) does not obligate us to go further. The Scottish community land fund can provide 90% of up to 1 million to pay for the land. We then have 56 days from mid-February to decide whether or not to go forward and 18 months to raise finances.

Wind Farm : A wind farm developer called Muirhall Energy is offering a 10% stake in a wind farm at Cross Dykes near Castlehill. Nick has been in discussion with Muirhall, Local Energy Scotland and the D&G Council Wind Farm officer regarding UEDG procuring this stake.

Next Meeting: Wednesday 4th February, 7.30pm.

Victoria Long
Secretary