

# Upper Eskdale Development Group Committee Meeting 5th May, 2021, 5.00pm (Zoom)

**Present:** Victoria Long, Bernard Provost, Lindsay Reid, Susie Lilley.  
Paul Barber attended to present his report which included agenda items.

**Apologies:** None

**Conflict of interest:** none

**Minutes of previous meetings:** Victoria read these out.  
March - confirmed as correct by Susie, seconded by Victoria  
April - confirmed as correct by Bernard, seconded by Victoria

## **Matters arising from previous minutes:**

- Vouchers: The date will be extended until the end of June. There are no reports that any have been used since reopening.
- Bar training. Helen Boittier, Sophie Dupre and Paul Barber took part in the bar training on 28th April with James King. Mark Gamblin has agreed to take on ordering and rota management.

**Manager's Report:** Paul Barber.  
This included the following subjects and discussion:

Opening hours: The Hub reopened to the public on 29th April 2021, 4 days per week, Thursday - Sunday 10am - 4pm. This will be reviewed at the end of May, with the possibility of adding Wednesday and increasing to 5pm close, depending on continued levels of footfall.

Staff: Pam and Helen resumed their normal hours in the cafe upon reopening. Frank will work Thursdays throughout May and is willing to pick up extra shifts going forward. The first Sunday back after reopening was unprecedentedly busy and the hall was used to serve food. Kitchen staff strongly expressed the need to have a support staff member during Sunday lunch service, even if this has to be paid.

KickStart: Paul has applied for this scheme: A government fully-funded initiative to have an employee, age 16-24 to be trained and help where needed at the Hub eg. admin. This opportunity will be advertised and coordinated by D&G 3rd Sector, who advise a timeline of 4 weeks.

## Events.

Pool and Pint nights and singing/music events will have to wait until D&G is down to level 1 of Covid restrictions.

A selection of other classes, treatments and exhibitions have commenced, mostly free or subsidised due to funding provided for 'start up'.

Church services resume monthly from Friday 7th May at 2pm.

Funding and finances: Robertson Trust has been applied to for funding of £20,000 (£10,000 each of next 2 years) to part fund OD Manager salary. They will confirm in two week's time. Paul will make a lottery application for the remainder.

Paul (OD manager) continues to undertake finance duties. Whilst this has been manageable, it will need to be reviewed by the end of May as normal business resumes.

Present overall funds in bank: £97,000

Reserves / Restricted Funds (approx.): £39,000

Unrestricted Funds (approx.): £58,000

**Membership:** Victoria highlighted a need to sign up new Members. Paul has sent an email to those respondents for his request for community input and information about what people want from the Hub. It is planned to get a new membership form out as soon as possible.

**Volunteer help:** There is an active rota board for volunteer help with the shop and cafe. Victoria expressed concern that more help is needed.

**Uplifting the exterior:** Victoria has spoken to Dulux to find out what they would recommend for stripping the existing peeling surfaces. The preference is to replace the varnish with a stain, rather than use paint.

**Fencing.** The fence along the front of the building is falling into disrepair. Sam Samson has offered the metal fencing that surrounded part of the Old School at Sibbaldbie, where he lives, for the price of £325 which includes a gate. The fence is long enough to replace the existing fence, except for 9m., which we will have to have made. Victoria is waiting for further communication on this from the Blacksmith in Lockerbie: Alan Thomson.

**Signage:** There is a plan to replace the existing, fixed road signs. Paul will design and have these printed. A sign in the playground: Play equipment, wheelchair friendly. Most people are unaware that this applies to the Wheelspin and the Trampoline.

**AOB:** None

**Next meeting: Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June at 5pm at the Hub**

## **APPENDIX**

### **OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGER REPORT**

Prepared by **Paul Barber**

Date: **5<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

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#### **Content:**

##### **Venue & Housekeeping:**

Opening Hours – presently open 10am till 4pm (Shop 11am-2pm). This will remain the case throughout the rest of May. To be reviewed towards the end of May in regard to opening an extra day in June (Wednesdays). In Level 3 restrictions until w/c 17<sup>th</sup> May when Level 2 is expected based on Government findings. Able to sell alcohol for outdoor drinking. 6 from 2 households max. per table in café. Staff service at table with food / drink. Staff completed full clean just prior to opening last week.

Ducts had annual cleaning two weeks ago. New gas on order, due Thursday.

### **Staff & Volunteers:**

Staff still on furlough at 80% pay at this point – to be reviewed at end of May subject to staff hours completed. Two members of staff are in the café each day and this will remain the case until the end of May – to be reviewed towards the end of May. There is a need for two staff each day in café due to present restrictions. It is clear that a third person is required for the hours of 12pm till 3pm on a Sunday to assist with serving and table clearing – this is being looked at for this Sunday onwards.

Presently looking at 'Kick Start' option to have fully funded employee (16-24yr old) for 6 months to work FOH and / or café area. In addition to salary funded, the Hub would receive £1,500 to cover any required training costs.

Active rota for volunteers on the white board in reception continues.

### **Finances (Commercial / Grants):**

The OD Manager is still undertaking finance duties and is near completion of all the requirements for April accounts. Again, this is manageable but to be reviewed as May progresses based on additional work requirements now we are open in view of till/cash work.

Present overall funds in bank: £97,000

Reserves / Restricted Funds (approx.): £39,000

Unrestricted Funds (approx.): £58,000

Estimated operational timescale if no change to present income / expenditure: 21 months up to December end 2022. If operating under normal hours with income / expenditure: 27 months up to July end 2023. This is based on conservative estimates.

Since opening on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> for 4 days till Sunday gone, footfall from locals was 25 (average 6.25 per day), from passing trade it was 84 (average 21 per day). Thursday and Friday were quiet but Saturday and Sunday was very busy.

Turnover from shop over the 4 days was £106 (average £26.50 per day); Café turnover was £861 (average £215.25 per day). 84% of this turnover was achieved on Sat and Sun and, in total, it is 28% higher than an average 4 day period so quite promising at this point.

Strategic Business Framework Fund paid a total £25,000 between Jan-May 2021. This has now ended and all funds are unrestricted.

Application submitted to The Robertson Trust for £20,000 over 2 years (£10,000 pa) towards salary for OD Manager. Further notes from funder came back for adjustments and these have been made. Outcome expected in a couple of weeks' time.

Room hire bookings have begun and will be reconciled at the end of May. This is for various sessions taking place that included subsidised rates for people to take part in.

Pending funding applications: Will update board as and when each one is progressing and amounts concerned.

### **Partners & Associates:**

Driftwood Cinema – had a further zoom meeting with them, now engaged in activities around opening up again – likely to be more so late summer onwards.

SSDA –South of Scotland Destination Alliance, attended launch zoom meeting. Has over 300 members across South Scotland to look at promotion of the area once, and beyond, lockdown lifting.

Meeting with EEA taking place this week to look at variety of events / sessions that they can lead on.

### **Events & Sessions:**

Exhibition from Helen Walsh in place for May (5<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>). For June (9<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>), it will be Sue Hughes from Old Toll House Crafts. Both exhibitions will be 24% commission based to the Hub on any sales.

Paint Aid, Tai Chi, and Shiatsu are all starting again from this week and in the coming weeks May. Paint Aid, Tai Chi will be free to the public. Shiatsu will be subsidised. Church service starting up again, monthly from this Friday 2pm.

**Marketing & Promotion:**

Work on-going on brand changes, those elements that have been released have been positively received.

A 'welcom back' questionnaire has been drafted to hand to those coming into the Hub, two questions to answer 'what you like about the hub' and 'what would you like to see at the hub' – answers from this will be interesting to see and will help to inform future bids and use towards marketing efforts. All forms will be put into a draw, to encourage completion, to win a 3 course Sunday Roast for two. To run throughout May.

Social Media – Facebook has 1,517 followers. Posts have reached 1,742 via sharing. The page has been visited 366 times in the past 4 weeks. A huge increase on last month but expected now we are open again.

Twitter account (@EskHubCaf) now has 73 followers at time of writing. 90% of all our Facebook page posts are also sent on twitter.

The website has had 271 visits in the past month with 653 various page views. 76% of traffic is UK, 13% USA. and 11% various other countries.