

Minutes of the Black Isle Men's Shed Special Members Meeting  
 2:00 pm Wednesday 8 March 2023  
 Chanonry Sailing Club

Present	Colin Blyth	Richard Evans (T)	John Ruickbie
	Steve Bramwell (T)	Michael Halley (T) (C)	George Smith
	Donald Cameron	Don Holding	John Tuach (T)
	Helen Cherry	Bob Johnston	Graham Tuley
	Richard Cherry (T)	Peter Lawrence (T)	Lewis Vernal
	Nicolaas du Preez	Sylvia Macdonald	Ken Wilson
	Zak Eastwood	Stewart Robertson	
	(C) = Chairman (T) = Trustee		

1) Mike Halley (MH) welcomed everyone. It was unfortunately necessary to call the meeting only 4 weeks after our AGM on 8 Feb 23 as the 1st Avoch Sea Scouts had served us at very short notice with a rent increase that was far beyond anything that we had expected or could afford.

2) Apologies None

3) Trustees and their roles:

Richard Cherry (RC) summarised the relevant aspects of Trustee responsibility for the finances of the Black Isle Men's Shed (BIMS), with reference to the guidance notes of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR): -

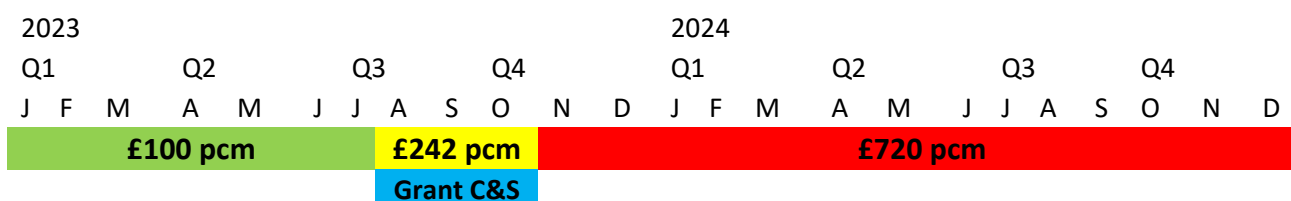
*... budget will be prepared and approved by the charity trustee board before the beginning of the financial year*

*[Trustees]... should have a clear, up-to-date picture of how the charity is doing financially, and the charity should have procedures in place to reduce any risks.*

4) Details of the rent increase announcement by the 1st Avoch Sea Scouts. Summary and possible consequences: -

a) RC reported an exchange of correspondence with Stephen Doughty (SD), Chairman of the Sea Scouts. The position today is that rent will remain at £100 per calendar month (pcm) until 15 July 2023, increasing to £242 pcm from then until the end of October, and to £720 pcm from 1 November onwards.

Steve Bramwell (SB) had negotiated a Grant from Caring and Sharing (C&S) of £142 pcm to keep the Shed contribution to £100 pcm.



- b) Peter Lawrence (PB) reminded us that during our Financial Year 2022 we had receipts of approx. £4500 which with payments of £4000 left us with a moderate surplus of £500 to bring into 2023. Our closing bank balance was just over £6000.

We anticipated a rent increase in line with inflation and PL was satisfied that we could absorb a 15-20% rise from our present £100 pcm to something in the region of £115-120. Anything greater than that would *bleed us to death* with a slow death at £140 pcm and a catastrophic decline in 2024 with the increase that the Scouts are proposing. Trustees cannot allow that to happen.

- c) SB confirmed that he had discussed this with C&S and would keep them up to date with events as they evolved.

5) The ensuing Discussion covered: -

- a) The validity of the Let Amendment to 2028: RC confirmed that this had been minuted during successive BIMS Board meetings during 2018, and that both Donnie McLeod and Stewart Robertson had clear recollections of it.

- b) Legal basis of the rent increase: Members were very sceptical that the Scouts had any grounds for increase beyond what was originally agreed: -

*The costs for the hall will be reviewed annually to cater for any additional use and inflation.*

- c) Possible alternative sites for our Shed.

SB reported on the newly formed Regenerate Our Green Space group (ROGS) and their work with the Scottish Land Fund, assisted by Highland and Islands Enterprise. This is the development agency for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland and is an executive non-departmental public body of the Scottish Government.

Graham Tuley confirmed that BIMS could continue their activities at Feddanhill Wood. MH thanked him on behalf of all of us; the Wood is a precious resource for Shed members.

Richard Evans reported his preliminary work with the concept of distributed working for Members using alternative workshop facilities. We would continue to use the Sailing Club for formal talks / lectures.

- 6) Bob Johnston thanked the Trustees for their work and invited those present to express their support for a decision, if necessary, by the Trustees to make arrangements for BIMS to withdraw from its present site in Avoch. This was seconded by Mike Hale and agreed unanimously.

Meeting closed at 3:10 pm, with further meetings to be arranged as necessary.