

Save Our Stute

Meeting Weds 11th November 2020 7.00pm via Zoom

Attendees: Kelly Ambrosini (KA) (Chair), Lisa Knight (LK), Colin White (CW), Daniel Childs (DCh), John Rottgardt (JR), Dave Reynolds (DR), Sue Clarke (SC), Dene Clarke (DC), John Raw (JR), Michelle Armstrong (MA), Anth Knight (AK)

Apologies: Trevor Horner

Review of minutes/ actions from last meeting

- Minutes were passed

Financial update

- The SHA holdings were £3,434.69 - this included expenses and bookings for the December G&Tea which of course may not go ahead, in which case the total did not account for the liabilities of refunds.
- In addition it was pointed out that most of the Save Our Stute masks ordered and produced had also already sold prior to the November 'lockdown'.
- **ACTION:** KA to ask Hazel what was made on sales of masks
- There was an additional amount of £320.60 in cash to hand over to be banked.
- **ACTION:** KA to hand over cash to SC to bank
- It was also mentioned that within this amount the family of Bob Strophair had contributed a collected donation of £125 which had been acknowledged publicly by the group.

Finances of the Institute

- DR set out what he knew of the Institute's precarious financial situation and that the most recent VAT bill had seen the Institute committee having to eat into the money reserved for the members Jackpot Draw.
- The question was put to the table as to what help the SOS Campaign could offer.
- It was noted that the Institute could apply for limited Govt/Local Authority Grant help from a point during the week after this meeting.
- The question was raised as to whether the Institute could generate revenue by selling takeaway beer during the recently imposed lockdown. A pertinent response was that with cheap canned beer on sale in the shops, and the Institute's draught ale being of similar quality but higher price by necessity, then it would not be a viable revenue stream.
- The discussion turned to grant funding, for which there seemed to be some limited options available.
- A discussion was had around Area Action Partnership (AAP) funding, with the conclusion being that the plight of the Institute is not a good fit for AAP funding, as they require specific projects with particular aims, but that the Scotto Trust may be worth approaching.
- **ACTION:** DC to provide details for contacting Andrew Walker of the AAP to ask about Scotto Trust and the potential to acquire funding there. (This was done)
- **ACTION:** DR to contact Andrew Walker
- JR advised the group that Etherley Cricket Club's Youth Cricket Club had been beneficiaries of the Scotto Trust
- It was suggested also that we reach out to Cllr. Brian Stephens and Cllr. Rob Yorke
- MA queried whether it was worth reaching out to the Freemasons
- **ACTION:** SC to contact someone she knows who is a lodge treasurer.
- There was also a suggestion that Government backed loans were available - though the group was not aware of the Criteria for application.
- **ACTION:** KA to investigate Govt backed loans.
- DR highlighted the Livin Community Fund as a possible source of support.
- **ACTION:** DR to look into and apply for a Livin Community Fund grant

- It was suggested that we move the Crowdfunder campaign forward to source some public backing. This would involve re-purposing it as a Covid Survival Appeal. It was agreed that this was something we could readily achieve.
- **ACTION:** AK and MA to revisit and develop the Crowdfunder page.
- In terms of publicity it was suggested that we seek to get local news interested. To contact the local press and TV news organisations.
- It was asked whether we should consider the National Lottery Heritage Fund, as Bishop Auckland Rugby Club had seen support from them to build a clubhouse.
- **ACTION:** DR to look at NLHF (This has been done and at present there are barriers to our applying - next step will be a meeting with Niall Hammond to strategise)
- It was pointed out that grant applications may take some time to process and that the Institute needed money in the shorter term - next few weeks/months.
- The question was raised as to whether some or all of the SOS money should be contributed and this principle was broadly agreed.
- **ACTION:** DR to make a Crowdfunder Campaign video at the weekend (14/15 Nov) with an appeal to camera featuring members of the group, staff and committee. DR and KA to timetable slots for people to come to the Stute to add their contributions individually. DR to produce script.
- **ACTION:** AK and MA to decide whether the Crowdfunder will include 'rewards' or not.
- The possibility that we might fail to save the Institute at this attempt was mooted and the need to develop a contingency plan as to how to salvage the remains following a failure and make the best of the situation to keep something going - though this was discussed no resolution was concluded on actions.

Stewardess's Flat Broken Boiler

- KA explained the situation that the Institute Stewardess had had a broken boiler in her flat for quite some time and that the institute clearly did not have the resources to repair it. She asked whether we might be able to intervene given that we are heading into winter.
- It was asked whether Paul Harle might be able to install a boiler (as a certified gas installer). However Shaun Thompson, as Secretary, had already sourced an engineer and it was the Committee's responsibility to do so.
- It was resolved that we would contribute up to £1,100 toward the cost of replacing the broken boiler

Members hall

- The meeting revisited the Members Hall plaques idea raised at a previous meeting.
- It was also suggested that the Members Hall plaques scheme could be progressed, though JR pointed out that members of the public might not buy a plaque if they feared that the Institute would close after they had done so.
- It was proposed to sell the plaques based upon a minimum donation of £30 but that there would be no upper limit.
- It was also pointed out that the purchase transactions would not entirely be straightforward and that a process of purchase needed to be designed.
- **ACTION:** DR to investigate backing board cost and order a 'proof of concept' plaque.
- (Addendum: At a later discussion, with everything going on with the Crowdfunding we agreed to defer the Members Hall actions to the New Year)

Events (pending)

- Though it was acknowledged that we did not know whether we could open in December, we would need to have a number of events in reserve in order to stimulate business if we are able.
- The following resolutions were passed.
- That we would hold a Christmas Quingo (18/12)

- That we would hold a Christmas Cheese Night in the hall (for extra space) - (11/12)
- **ACTION:** DR to check with Theo the Cheeseman (Dave)
- That we would go ahead with the Christmas Wreath Workshop (7/12)
- That we would progress the G & Tea events, with limitations and offer refunds where requested if that did not satisfy.
- It was proposed to contact the singer that Hazel (stewardess) knows to replace the Share the Darkness event
- That the Eric and the Vikings event would go ahead with Lisa taking sales and Sue providing refunds if it fails to go ahead.

Vision Document

- AK reported that the Vision Document to present to potential funders - outlining why the Stute is important to us and what our vision for the future is - was 50-60% complete.
- **ACTION:** AK to circulate draft during week commencing 16th November

AOB

- It was proposed that we have a separate social media account for the SHA - this was resolved as accepted
- It was proposed that as we had been prevented from applying for a grant for the Institute on the basis of not having enough unrelated SHA directors that we should expand the directorship - this was resolved as agreed, and that we should seek and advertise through social channels for two new volunteer unpaid directors.
- **ACTION:** DR to put some wording together re Director role.
- The group were reminded that Tim Dunn's "The Architecture The Railways Built" episode that featured Shildon would be repeated on Mon 17th Nov.
- The matter of SHA email addresses for directors was raised
- **ACTION:** DR to sort email addresses for those that did not have them yet.
- The group reviewed the success of their recent Remembrance Day initiatives with the Stute.
- It was pointed out that as the Royal British Legion may reform in Shildon there might be an opportunity to work in closer partnership with them in future.
- It was suggested that - if at all possible - an SOS "End of Year" Social should be organised - Pending outcome of the Covid-19 'lockdown' - this was agreed.

Next meeting 17/12/2020 19:00 location Zoom.