

**Minutes of the Royal British Legion Scotland, Thurso Branch Committee meeting held in the Clubrooms, Riverside Road on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023.**

Present: Mac McGill Chair  
 Simon Middlemas President  
 Joe McNeil  
 John Blake  
 Ron Galloway  
 Robert Gray

Apologies: Albert McIvor  
 Tim Hooper  
 Karin Freeman  
 Roy Kirk  
 Alex Mathers  
 Zena Latcham

## **MINUTES**

### **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mac McGill, Chair, welcomed those present and opened the meeting. Mac reported that any feedback he has sought within the community towards us has been favourable to date. Mac also attended an H&I Area event at which it was acknowledged that Thurso was doing well.

### **2. SILENT TRIBUTE**

The President led the silent tribute at the invitation of the Chair.

### **3. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Mac thanked all for their contribution towards the Branch. He also asked for ideas on how we can better motivate the membership and possibly enhance Committee participation. This in turn relates to how we make the Branch more relevant and up to date at a local level with modern attitudes, although it is also acknowledged that the wider RBL organisation at National level has the same problem.

### **4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the last Branch meeting, RBL-TBC(2023)M01, held in the Clubrooms on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 had been circulated in advance to members. These were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting. The minutes were proposed by Simon Middlemas and seconded by Joe MacNeil.

No issues were raised from the minutes.

### **5. STATUS OF ACTIONS**

See Appendix.

### **6. BRANCH FINANCIAL REPORT**

Joe McNeil noted the following:

- Bank account currently sat at £8,429.86
- Capitation Fee's of £10,960 paid to RBL HQ.

- Membership renewal income has been coming in steadily.
- OSCR report due in next couple of months.
- Expects Branch account to settle around £7,000 after activity.
- Expectation of £800-£1,000 spend to cover AFD event support.

The Chairman asked what the optimum holding in the Branch account should be and the Treasurer stated he would like it be around £10,000. In this regard, fundraising for the Branch was raised and will be referenced later.

## **7. SPORTS CONVENERS REPORT**

We do not currently have a Sports Convener and RBLs HQ have cancelled sports at National and Area level for this year at least, leaving it to individual Branches and Clubs to organise as they see fit. No contact has been made to date with member John Bain who it was felt may be interested in assuming the role of our Sports Convener. From his attendance at an H&I Area event where sports had been discussed Mac suggested we could co-ordinate with the Fort William and Kirkwall Branches with a view to organising sporting events which will be investigated.

## **8. ANGLING CONVENOR'S REPORT**

John Blake noted that:

- The Angling Section has held two meetings to date this year.
- The boats have been refurbished and are now all out on the lochs.
- Take up of activities is increasing as the season progresses.
- There has been no winter sea angling trips this season due to inclement weather which contrasts with last winter when the trips held yielded good catches.
- Mac stated he had just found out about the existence of the DFFA (Dounreay Fly Fishing Association). John stated they were subsidised by Dounreay to some degree whereas our Angling Section is completely self-sufficient.

## **9. FUNDRAISING REPORT & ARMED FORCES DAY PLANNING**

Various options were aired for fundraising activities to supplement and enhance the Branch account going forward. We currently host Car Boot sales in our Function Hall for various organisations, with the income going to the hirers. John Blake suggested we hold one in-house with the proceeds allocated to the Branch and this will be looked at. We also hosted Branch coffee mornings in the past which may be worth looking at again.

Planning for the Armed Forces Day Fair is progressing well with various organisations promising to support the event.

## **10. WELFARE REPORT**

With Zena absent there was no formal report but we have not been informed of any welfare activity. The Branch though, as always, stands ready to assist should we receive any requests.

## **11. COMMUNICATIONS**

Simon Middlemas noted that the website was now up to date, but suggested we upload more recent pictures of the premises to replace the current examples. The entertainment section now points to Facebook for current up-to-date information and is reinforced by the new information TV screen installed outside the Bar door facing members and guests on entry. He also suggested

when the Hall renovations are completed we invite the local press to do an article to promote the premises.

**12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Simon made a proposal at the H&I Area Council meeting stating the RBLs as a whole must adapt to the changing times or is at risk of failing which has now been adopted and will be put forward for consideration by the members at the RBLs Annual Conference in Perth on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> May. RBLs HQ has now circulated details of the proposal as part of the Conference preparations along with Branch Ballot Sheets with which to record individual Branch votes for return to HQ. Simon has expressed concerns that some Branches and Area's have misinterpreted the substance of the proposal and have either been voting against it or abstaining, seeming to think it will mean that non-service members will not have to pay for membership. This will require to be addressed by HQ prior to the Conference.

**Mac McGill**  
**Chair, RBL Branch Committee**  
04 December 2022

**ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING**

None

**ACTIONS ONGOING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

None

**ACTIONS COMPLETED SINCE LAST MEETING**

RBL-TBC(2022)M05/A01: Simon to send out sheet highlighting Committee positions and recommendations to members and guests.

RBL-TBC(2022)M04/A01: Simon Middlemas to explore Fares4Free website in relation to supporting veterans. Website link [HOME \(fares4free.org\)](http://fares4free.org)

RBL-TBC(2022)M03/A02: Simon Middlemas and Zena Latcham to get together to update welfare website pages. Simon Middlemas agreed to update Welfare pages on website.