

Abu Dhabi Scottish Society

Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday 5th October

Location: The Club, Meeting Room

Present: Jane, JP, Kerry L, Alan, Kerry S, Sean

Apologies: Kelly

Welcome

- Jane opened the meeting.

Approval Of Minutes

- The previous minutes were considered; Heather proposed and JP seconded therefore the minutes were approved. Heather and JP were noted in connection with approval. The source notes do not record a formal decision.

Treasurer's Update

- The Society has approximately AED 81,000 available: around AED 50,000 in cash and AED 31,000 in the bank. The cash balance needs to be recounted and confirmed.
- Golf event income and expenditure were reviewed; it was noted that there was a net figure of AED 1,968. The expense entries also include payments of AED 100, AED 150 and AED 50, with a total of AED 3,418 noted.
- The committee discussed improving financial transparency and ensuring the Society can fund a full event without relying on sponsorship.
- Soho Books was suggested as an affordable accounting platform with useful features. A separate bank account may require affiliation with the UK Caledonian Society and a sponsor.
- The current arrangement, with a significant proportion of cash held by Sean, creates a continuity risk. Sharing responsibility for holding cash was suggested.

Actions

Action	Responsible
Recount the cash balance and reconcile the figures recorded for the golf event.	Sean - Treasurer
Investigate Soho Books and, if suitable, arrange to speak with the Dive Club about setup.	Jane
Explore requirements for opening a Society bank account, including affiliation and sponsorship; consider a safer shared cash-handling arrangement.	Jane / Sean

Membership Secretary Update

- One new member has joined since the previous meeting. Three memberships are awaiting payment, which would bring membership to 95.
- Membership is expected to increase around the Ceilidh. Members could be offered the opportunity to renew and pay in advance at the event.
- Digital membership cards remain to be explored, potentially linked to the members' area of the website. The Irish Society's cards were mentioned as a useful example.

Actions

Action	Responsible
Follow up the three pending membership payments and offer renewals at the Ceilidh.	Amy
Explore digital membership cards and possible integration with the website members' area.	Amy / Website team

Social Media Updates

- The social media activity is attracting interest. Instagram has approximately 158 followers, with strong story views and engagement since the weekend.
- Instagram stories are being saved to highlights. The committee favored sharing event photos and thank-you posts after events, particularly where a group photo is available.
- Facebook group settings need checking. Membership questions are acceptable, but unrelated advertisements should be removed.
- The Instagram account is difficult to find; changing the handle to a clearer name such as "Scottish Society Abu Dhabi" was suggested. The account setup is linked to a personal account rather than the Society email which cannot currently be changed and can cause issues

Actions

Action	Responsible
Review the Instagram handle and options to make the account easier to find.	Kerry S
Check Facebook group settings and remove unrelated advertisements.	Social media admins
Share post-event photos and thank attendees where appropriate.	Social media admins

Feedback and Debrief Golf Event

- The event was well received, and Amy was thanked for her work.
- Some attendees raised concerns about food quality.
- The fact that children could attend gained positive feedback and was appreciated,
- The committee supported running the event again in next year's events calendar.
- The committee discussed perceptions around raffle fairness. Although no committee member won the main prizes, the committee should remain mindful of appearances and address concerns if they arise although committee members do pay for tickets and often purchase several which boosts funds.

Ceilidh– 14th November

- The menu was approved.
- A welcome drink was rejected because it would add AED 15 per person and increase ticket prices.
- Ticket prices were agreed at AED 200 for members and AED 250 for non-members.
- Interest has already been received, including a table booking for ten.
- The Club will prepare the tickets, poster and raffle arrangements.
- Raffle prizes, including smaller vouchers, are needed.
- Prizes must be confirmed by 4 November to allow time for the required licence; without a licence, there can be no raffle.
- David will act as MC. A bottle of whisky was suggested as a thank-you.
- Aside from the Ceilidh it was noted that The Bottle Shop code needs to be changed.
- Members should be given an initial opportunity to book.
- Club members who are not Society members will pay the non-member rate.

Actions

Action	Responsible
Contact the Club to coordinate publicity and event arrangements.	Jane
Confirm raffle prizes by 4 November and ensure the licence is applied for in time.	Send prize list to Jane
Arrange the MC and confirm the whisky gift for David.	
Change the Bottle Shop code once the relevant arrangements are confirmed.	JP
Poll members and offer them the first opportunity to book tickets.	Membership Secretary

Burns Supper

- The Boat Park venue outdoors at the Club is confirmed.
- The outdoor venue is more spacious; décor costs need to be considered
- The main hall will be held as a weather contingency. The committee favoured the outdoor option if the weather is suitable, with a decision on the Wednesday before the event.
- Jane will meet the Club to discuss the menu. A three-course meal was discussed, including haggis starter, beef and sticky toffee pudding; a vegetarian haggis option should be considered. If beef pushes cost up an alternative main course would be at the suggestion of the Club Chef
- The proposed schedule is arrival from 6:00 pm for 6:30 pm, with guests seated by 7:00 pm for drinks and dinner.
- Proposed programme:
 - Address to the Haggis – James Alexander;
 - Immortal Memory – Calum Scott (10–15 minutes);
 - Tam o' Shanter – Gary after dinner;
 - Piper – Ewan Brown;
 - Toast Lassies – Scott McMorran (around five minutes);
 - Response to the Laddies – speaker to be confirmed
- Raffle throughout the evening – Prizes to be sourced by next meeting and for license before 4th November

- Ticket prices are to be confirmed after discussions with the Club. Previous prices were noted as AED 325 and AED 375; costs may rise due to current supply chain despite one fewer course.
- Dress code should be specified as black tie or national dress.
- A whisky-sponsored arrival and sparkling wine were discussed, but welcome-drink sponsorship needs to be considered. There will be no whisky majlis this year.
- The committee discussed keeping speeches concise and asking attendees not to talk over performers.
- Potential sponsorship leads include Spinneys, Red Kite Renovations, Caledonian Limousines and WolfCraig Whisky. McGregor and McDuff may be approached about a promotional tie-in and prize; Suited and Booted also offers kilts, so any approach should consider the overlap.
- The event license needs to be arranged.

Actions

Action	Responsible
Meet the Club to confirm menu options, costs and ticket price.	Jane
Decide whether to use the outdoor venue, subject to the weather, on the Wednesday before the event.	Club and Committee
Contact Ewan Brown regarding piping.	Sean
Approach Red Kite Renovations and Caledonian Limousines about sponsorship.	Sean
Follow up with Spinneys regarding sponsorship.	Amy
Explore a Burns Supper promotion or prize with McGregor and McDuff, taking account of potential overlap with Suited and Booted.	Sean
Confirm programme participants and keep speech timings concise.	Jane
Confirm welcome-drink sponsorship and vegetarian haggis option.	JP Jane /Sean
Apply for the event licence.	Club

Website Update

- The website is nearly complete and the photographs have been received. Jane and JP plan to meet this week, with the aim of making the site live and launching it through social media.

Actions

Action	Responsible
Meet to finalise the website and aim to publish it this week, followed by a social media launch.	Jane and JP

New Partners and Discounts List

- Further time is needed to gather responses to the partnership and discount outreach; WhatsApp messages and emails have been sent.
- The Bottle Shop code should be changed once arrangements are confirmed.

Actions

Action	Responsible
Follow up responses from prospective partners and finalise the discounts list.	Partnerships lead / committee
Update the Bottle Shop code after confirmation of the arrangements.	Website / partnerships lead

Future Events Planning / Calendar

- Boat Party: late February or early March.
- Golf event: February.
- Ramadan is expected to begin on 8 February.
- Six Nations fixtures noted: Scotland v Italy – 6 February, 6:10 pm; Scotland v Wales – 13 February, 10:30 pm; Scotland v Ireland – 5 March, 12:20 pm; Scotland v England – 13 March, 8:40 pm (Super Saturday).
- Upcoming events should be listed on the website.
- Home venue to be confirmed – Victors?

Actions

Action	Responsible
Develop plans for the Boat Party, 6 Nations and February golf event and add to future agenda.	Events team
Add Society events to the website calendar once the site is live.	Website team

AOB

- David is to be invited to the next committee meeting on 2 November.

Actions

Action	Responsible
Invite David to the committee meeting on 2 November.	Meeting organiser / Secretary

Future meeting dates

- 2 November – in person.
- 9 December – online.
- 7 December and 4 January were also listed in the source notes; the sequence and format require confirmation.
- 18 January.