**DUNBLANE – LIKHUBULA PARTNERSHIP**

**A Scotland-Malawi Partnership - Scottish Charity Number SCO 38877**

**Steering Committee Minutes - 23RD April 2014**

**1) Present:**

Iain Smith (Chairperson**),** Stuart Brown,Tom Smith, Ann Hale, Anne McEwan, Christy Cunningham, Alba Escala**,** Laura Patch,George Bond**,** Catriona Glen, John Kilby, Jean Rutherford, Kitty McKee, Fiona Anderson, Neil Kitching, Ian Brown, Ivor Butchart, Audrey Cooper, Rev Colin Renwick.

**2) Welcome & Introductions**

The committee extended a very warm welcome to Rev Colin Renwick and Audrey Cooper who were attending the Dunblane-Likhubula Partnership Steering Committee for the first time.

**3) Minutes** of the meeting held on 5th March 2014 were approved.

**4)** **Matters Arising**:

All covered under the relevant Agenda item below.

**5) High School Activities:**

DHS advised that communication with Chambe High School had been re-established on 12th April, the earlier problems being due to difficulties with the power supply in Likhubula. DHS would reply once Likhubula students returned to school on the 28th April and would give them an update on local events. It was also intended to use mobile phones for text/email contact as necessary.

DHS updated the committee on the fundraising and associated plans for their Likhubula Nurse project:

* 24th May - New wristbands for sale at the ‘Fling by the River’
* September - Annual Likhubula day at DHS
* September – introducing the school chaplains to the nurse project
* October – presentation to SAGT (Scottish Association of Geography Teachers)
* 24th October - Ceilidh in the Victoria Halls
* 15th November - Coffee morning in the Cathedral Halls

In addition, on 10th June activities were planned with the Primary 7s from Newton, St Mary’s and Dunblane to introduce them to the school’s Likhubula partnership.

The DHS target to raise £2000 was aimed at the initial costs of providing a local nurse in Likhubula and further consideration would be given to the best means of providing ongoing support for this post.

The committee offered their warm congratulations to DHS for all their efforts on fundraising and Stuart offered to assist with any necessary paperwork for the Ceilidh in the Victoria Halls.

The ‘entry’ fee for the ‘Fling by the River’ had been paid and DHS would lead on manning the Likhubula stand on the 24th May. Ann H, John, Tom and Fiona volunteered to assist and Fiona provided DHS with local articles for sale on the stand.

Fiona presented a draft tri-fold brochure on the Dunblane-Likhubula Partnership for comments/amendments with the aim of having these printed and available for the ‘Fling'. Jenni recommended the use of a local printer to prepare the final product.

**Action: All to review and provide comments to Fiona on the draft Brochure by Wed 30th April**

**6) Finance:**

Current bank balance stood at £11076 plus Gift Aid of £851. After reduction of the circa £8.8K commitment for the new Toilets this would leave approx £3K balance.

Neil noted that the generous regular donations from a relatively small number of individuals accounted for approx. £5K income per annum.

Jenni undertook to obtain a copy of the latest bank statement from the Likhubula Committee

**Action: Jenni to request a copy of the latest Likhubula bank statement.**

**7) Toilets:**

During her recent visit to Likhubula Audrey Cooper had viewed and discussed the progress of the construction programme with the local builder. The four main pits had been dug and drainage plans agreed. Assurances had been given that the site would be safe for the children’s return to school on 28th April. Target completion date was stated as 5th May though Audrey expected some slippage to that date.

Audrey noted that the Water Tank was not in use as some 6 metres of pipe was missing. Stuart believed this pipework was available locally and could be connected easily.

**8) Fistula Project:**

Iain provided an update on the Rotary work with the Freedom from Fistula and the Midwife Training projects. The first group of 31 students were due to graduate in July with the second group of 33 students in October. It was noted that the forthcoming Presidential elections in Malawi could affect future developments on this work. It was hoped that the Mulanje region would see a direct benefit from this work but to some extent this was dependent on the leaders of local communities.

Audrey reported on the schooling and craft skills given to patients in hospital and the follow-up support when they left – for example each was given a solar box which could be used to charge mobile phones and allow them to earn some income.

**9) Link with Mvano:**

Audrey had spoken to Stella during her visit to Likhubula and obtained some more background on the recent problems with Mvano. A new group had been formed and election of a Chairperson was expected shortly. Stella had confirmed she would be in touch soon with Dunblane.

The committee welcomed the ongoing links with Stella and it was agreed to follow-up Audrey’s visit with an email to Stella to re-affirm our desire to maintain contact with Mvano.

**Action: Audrey to email Stella.**

**10) Bursars and Further Education:**

Audrey reported on her discussion with the local committee:

* the first term report for the Bursars had recently been received and will be forwarded to Dunblane shortly.
* Often had purchased all the school books with the exception of only one still to be obtained.
* Gift and Christina had not been successful in their interviews for nursing training at Holy Family College though Gift has also applied for training in Blantyre.

The committee noted the difficulties of gaining entry to nursing training without family links or sponsorship funding.

Tom advised that his further correspondence with Mr Nyambala had not produced any clear recommendation on the best possible means to provide extra food to Bursars. The committee discussed the pros and cons of the proposal noting the difficulties of ensuring fairness and avoiding adverse local perceptions. Ann H stated it was important that we should do something to make this food available; Stuart proposed that it might be easier and less contentious if all Bursars received the same amount.

In conclusion it was agreed to ask the Likhubula committee for their views and confirmation that they would be prepared to decide/administer the local food distribution over Oct-April each year.

**Action: Tom/Jenni to approach the Likhubula committee for views/comments.**

**11) Publicity & Communication:**

**One Minute Video**

Details had just been received from the SMP on the video competition being run in conjunction with the planned re-launch of the SMP website. A 50-second video illustrating work with Malawi was required by 23rd June. Fiona and Jenni undertook to take the lead on production of a video.

**Action: Fiona/Jenni to produce 50 second video**

**New SMP website**

The new SMP website was due to be launched on 6th July - the 50th anniversary of Malawian independence. Opportunities were being offered for member groups assist with the development of the new website and to promote their work via photos/blogs.

**Action: George to monitor development of the SMP website**

**Dunblane Committee photo**

A photograph of the committee would be arranged for the next meeting.

**Action: George to ask Ewing Wallace to assist.**

**Address List**

The committee agreed to maintain an up-to-date address/contact list for its members and to hold this in a password-protected part of the Dunblane-Likhubula website.

**Action:**

**Ian B to set up password-protected folder**

**George to provide spreadsheet with contact details**

**Dunblane-Likhubula Partnership Website**

Ian B asked the committee to provide updates on our projects for the web-site. Stuart proposed that minutes of the meeting could be provided and held on our web-site instead of email circulation.

**Action:**

**Committee members to update the Partnership web-site for current projects.**

**Ian B to facilitate committee meeting minutes to be held on the Partnership website.**

**12) Any Other Business:**

The committee expressed its very grateful appreciation to Audrey for taking the time whilst in Malawi to follow-up and report back on the progress of the Dunblane-Likhubula projects

The committee also congratulated Matthew Anderson for raising the impressive sum of £1700 for Mary’s Meals from his 100 mile sponsored cycle ride around Islay.

**13) Date of next Meeting:**

• 4th June – Tom to chair