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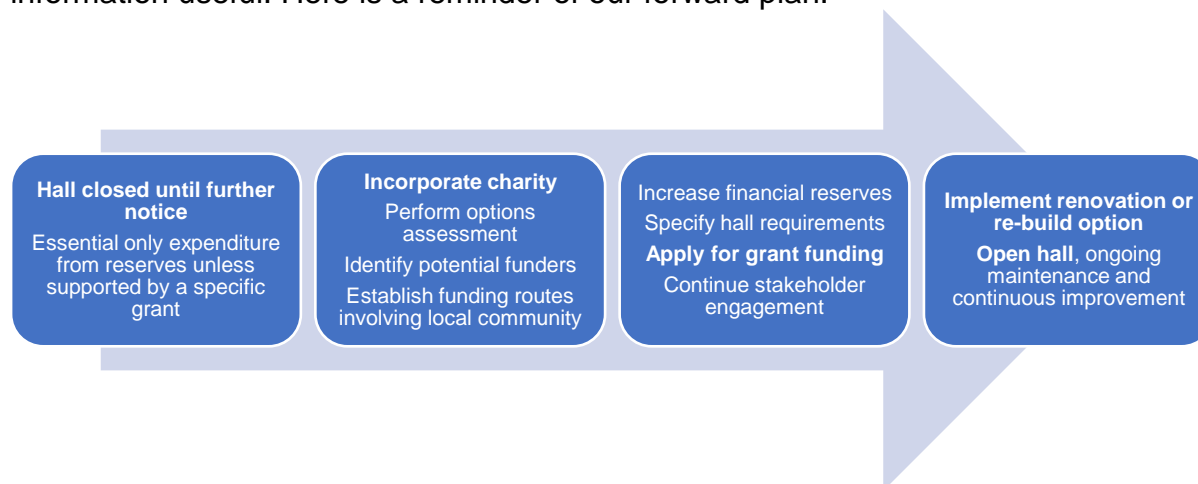
## **April 2021 update from Melvich Village Hall Association**



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Melvich Village Hall Association (MVHA) is an unincorporated registered charity and our object is “*To provide, or assist in the provision of, facilities for the recreation of other leisure-time occupation, in the interest of social welfare in an effort to improve the conditions of life of the inhabitants of the district of Bighouse, Melvich, Portskerra, Golval and Kirkton, all in the Parish of Farr.*”

We provided all households in our charitable area with an update at the end of December 2020 detailing our forward plans and sharing information on the outcome of the consultation exercise that we performed. We trust that you found this information useful. Here is a reminder of our forward plan:



A lot has happened since our last communication with you so we felt that it is important to give you another update.

## 2. HALL STATUS

The village hall remains closed due to COVID-19 and due to remedial works being required. MVHA have reduced expenditure so far as reasonably practicable and have been using our limited reserves to pay for essential expenditure (e.g. insurance, electricity, accountancy, etc).

We successfully applied to SSE Strathy North Windfarm Community Fund for funding to address legacy issues and to gather information ahead of the options assessment process. These funds have been used to: cover legal fees for completing the transfer of a small area of land to MVHA from the late Mrs Flett; perform an asbestos condition survey of the hall; perform a structural condition survey of the hall; and to address issues associated with trees encroaching onto the land of the neighbouring old post office building. It is planned to clear the land with the trees next to the hall in mid April 2021 – this work needs to be done regardless of whether we renovated the hall with a new extension or plan/build a replacement hall. A copy of the asbestos condition survey and/or the structural condition survey are available to you upon request.

The asbestos condition survey identified that there is chrysotile asbestos in the external profiled sheets of the hall. Although these pose a very low risk to health if left undisturbed, it was recommended in the report that the asbestos containing material be removed. Again, whether the hall is refurbished or rebuilt this is

required. The structural condition survey was independently performed by Arch Henderson LLP. The report states:

*“It is apparent from a visual inspection that the building is in a poor physical condition and it suffers from the following structural defects:*

- *Ineffective/damaged roof cladding*
- *Ineffective/damaged wall cladding*
- *Excessive local settlement/movement to roof trusses*
- *Main load-bearing walls out of plumb*
- *Ingress of soils along western elevation*
- *Rotted floor construction to lean-to section*
- *Damaged/ineffective rainwater goods*
- *Rotted doors, windows & fascia boards*
- *Negligible provision of thermal insulation*

*It is additionally noted that the building does not satisfy current Building Standards in respect of accessibility.*

*Despite its generally poor condition, it is believed that the building does not possess any critical structural conditions which present an immediate threat to stability. It is therefore considered that there is no risk of collapse at present, and the building may remain in service for the time being.”*

The report gave an extensive list of remedial recommendations which would need to be implemented to restore the building to an acceptable condition and level of performance. The report concluded *“Given the significant age of the building and the considerable extent of the defects, consideration should be given to a new-build rather than a refurbishment. The existing building footprint may not be most conducive to a modern layout and it is believed that there may be significant advantages to be gained from a new site location, including an improved internal layout and an increased set-back from the A836.”*

### **3. INCORPORATION OF CHARITY**

MVHA is currently an unincorporated charity however a resolution was passed at a public meeting, in accordance with the charity’s constitution, to permit the charity trustees to apply to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) to form a new charity called “Melvich Community SCIO”, transfer the assets/liabilities of MVHA into “Melvich Community SCIO” and wind down MVHA. SCIO stands for Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation and incorporating this aspect in the name will help us with future funding applications.

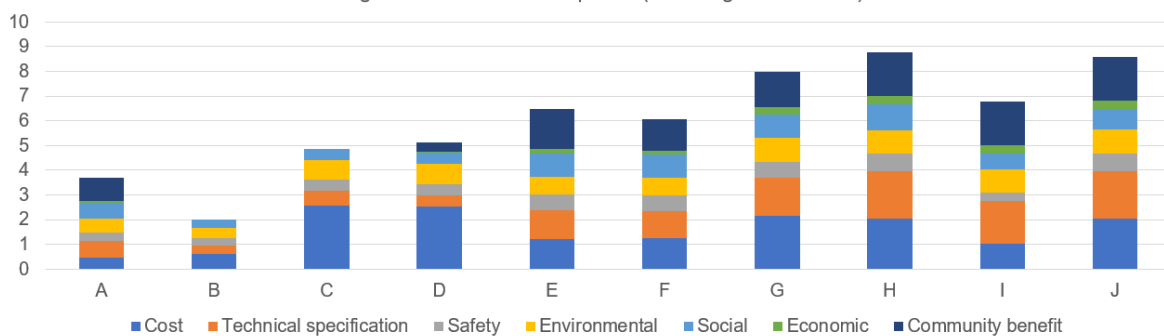
An application for the formation of “Melvich Community SCIO” is currently with OSCR for consideration/approval. We anticipate that by around Autumn 2021 we will be able to start transferring assets and liabilities over to the new charity. This is a significant step forward and reduces liabilities for the charities trustees significantly so we can move forward with improving our community assets. There are legal costs associated with this change and we have secured additional funding from SSE Strathy North Windfarm Community Fund to assist in this matter.

### **4. OPTIONS ASSESSMENT FOR THE FUTURE OF THE HALL**

We committed to performing an options assessment on the future of the hall. A multi-attribute decision analysis technique was used to qualitatively assess the ten options that had been identified on a comparative basis against 31 attributes that had been weighted based on their relative importance. We would like to thank the committee and members of our community who engaged in this process for their input. The results from the options assessment are shown below.

Do nothing	Closure		Renovation		New build				
A. Leave the hall as it is and restart using it.	B. Close the hall and never use it again.	C. Knock down existing hall and leave the ground levelled.	D. Knock down exiting hall and build a Memorial garden in it's place	E. Renovate existing hall and build the extension that we have planning permission for.	F. Renovate existing hall to address current issues and not proceed with new extension.	G. Knock down existing hall and build a replacement hall on the same footprint.	H. Knock down existing hall, acquire adjacent land and build a replacement hall on the new footprint.	I. Construct new village hall at another location and leave the existing hall in place.	J. Construct new village hall at another location and knock down existing hall.

Weighted assessment of options (including all attributes)



The options involving a new build hall scored the highest, followed by options involving renovation. Doing nothing and closure options scored very poorly. In the coming months, MVHA plan to start progressing arrangements for knocking down the existing hall, trying to purchase additional land to increase the available footprint for the hall and starting the process of designing a new hall. We have had some input from groups and individuals in our community on what they would like available at our hall but we want to hear your views too. We are planning to hold a [Public meeting, using Zoom, on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7pm.](#) If you would like to discuss the options assessment outcome, our plan to implement the preferred option(s) or to tell us what you would like considered in the specification for the new hall then please email [melvichvillagehall190@gmail.com](mailto:melvichvillagehall190@gmail.com) to share your views and/or get an email invite to the public Zoom meeting.

We are now starting to identify potential funders and local fund-raising initiatives so that we can make our community's vision of a new hall become a reality.

## 5. DONATIONS

If you would like to make a donation towards the new hall project then please either send us a cheque made payable to "Melvich Village Hall Association" c/o R Kerr, Seaview, Portskerra KW14 7YL [or](#) donate at [www.easydonate.org/NTPN01](http://www.easydonate.org/NTPN01) [or](#) to give £5 text: NTPN01 to 70970 [or](#) to give £10 text: NTPN01 to 70191

***Thank you. We will keep you updated on developments as we move forward***