

## BOARD MINUTES



**Board Date**      16<sup>th</sup> January 2017

**Board Time:**    5.00pm to 6.50pm

**Present:**            Ian Pope (IP), Alan Bowlas (AB), Bernard Shaw (BS), Ross Weddle (RW)

**In Attendance:**    Julien Lake (JL), Ian Guthrie (IG) and Ann Short(AS) and Jan Casson(JC) as observers.

### **Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016 were approved and signed as a true record. The only matters raised were to confirm that there had been no feedback from the County Council regarding the empty houses highlighted to them by the Trust and that there was nothing further to report on the Harbour Commission's application to the Coastal Communities for assistance towards the cost of repairs to the jetty.

### **2 Finance**

IG issued a report showing the near actual year end unrestricted income and expenditure for the period to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 compared with the budget to the same date. He emphasised that the figures were only indicative at this stage as there were still a number of year end accruals to include in the accounts. He anticipates that drafts of the year end final accounts should be available for consideration at the next Board meeting in March.

IG advised that he has finally had the opportunity to speak with Baxendale's to get a better understanding of the figures in the turbine financial model. He explained that further details were awaited on two items in the model which covered significant expenditure ie other overheads and operating costs. Once these were supplied the full revenue implications of the project would be known. IG also advised that as part of the discussions he had with Baxendale's it became clear that there were potentially some decisions to be taken around the longer term capital financing of the project. The

current model takes no account of the repayment of the capital in the subordinate debt and assumes the capital on the principal financing which is outstanding after ten years of the project will be repaid in full at that time. In addition to these two items the level of interest on the loans needs to be looked at to ensure that the amount being paid is reasonable in the current market conditions.

IG suggested that once the details of the expenditure items highlighted above were available he would discuss these and the other matters raised on the longer term financing with JL and IP as part of one of their regular meetings. The outcome would be reported back to a subsequent Board meeting.

The report was noted.

### **3 College Project**

JL produced a report to update members on discussions he is having with Northumberland College regarding the Old Brewery site in Tweedmouth. The report outlined the recent progress that had been made together with some broad outline financial figures and confirmation that positive informal discussions had taken place with the Conservation Officer for NCC about the potential redevelopment. JL confirmed that the owner had agreed to sell the building to the Trust for a fixed price and not to sell to another party before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. He emphasised that there had only been very broad costings done on the possible redevelopment of the site and that the key stage was for the College's Executive Team to come to the site to meet with ourselves and confirm (or otherwise) their continued interest in the development. This meeting is now scheduled to be held next week and will be crucial in deciding the next stage.

Board members asked a number of questions but were very positive about the proposal and felt that, provided the financial position was secured, it would be a very worthwhile and beneficial project.

It was agreed that JL should continue his discussions and that he would report back to the next meeting but if there were any urgent decisions required he would advise members and, if necessary, convene a special Board meeting.

### **4 Staffing and Board**

IP advised that he was concerned that there was a shortage of Board members and asked Ann Short and Jan Casson if they were prepared to stand as co-opted members of the Board. They both confirmed they were willing to stand and it was the unanimous wish of the Board that they be co-opted. Members were asked to think of names of other potential Board members who could be approached. IP also re-iterated that he would not wish to stand as Chair from the next annual meeting.

IP advised that it was some time since a review of salaries had been carried out for various staff and that he would like a small group of Trustees to look at this and report back to the next meeting. It was agreed that JC/AS/AB would form the review group.

## **5 Chief Executive Officer Report**

JL advised the following items

- The turbine continues to perform well
- The revised website was now live, being used wider and generally well received
- Enterprise Car Club are exploring the potential of establishing a car club in Berwick and it is important this does not conflict with our research into this idea. We have also joined with the Town Council in an application for European Commission money to explore the use of electric cars.
- As part of his report JL issued the findings of the Barrack's re-awakening group meetings which highlighted that there was unlikely to be any immediate changes in the use of the Barracks. JL felt that small steps in developing wider usage of the site linked to the tourist offer was the way forward
- There is still nothing further from the County Council regarding the future of the Children's Centre but the current arrangements are working well for the Trust
- There are some historical issues with the roof leaking in the rear part of the WEB building which are being investigated. The effect could be significant with one firm suggesting a complete replacement. RW pointed out that a number of years ago there was a suggestion of creating a mezzanine floor in this area and if the roof was to be replaced it may be worth examining this further. JL also advised that there were problems with radiators in various parts of the building
- The formal announcement on the success of our application to DGLC for the creation of a Coastal communities Team will be announced on 20<sup>th</sup> January. There is £10k of funding which will come through the Trust and an Economic

Plan needs to be developed by 31<sup>st</sup> March. Volunteers (paid or unpaid) will be needed to ensure this happens.

- The Carnegie Trust has accepted our application to be part of their Town Twinning project and we have been twinned with Fishguard. A £7,500 fund is available to share between the two towns and this also gives us an opportunity to learn and potentially access other resources from The Carnegie Trust

## **6 Any Other Business**

RW advised that he had been approached by a Mr Cook from the newly opened Brown Bear public house asking if the Trust's would work with them as they attempt to establish the venture. RW/JL are to look at their proposals but to proceed with extreme caution.

RW advised that a Tree Preservation order had now been placed on the Goody Patchy site in Tweedmouth.

There were no further matters arising and the meeting closed at 6-50pm.

