

## BOARD MINUTES



**Board Date** 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Board Time:** 5.00pm to 7.00pm

**Present:** Ian Pope (IP), Keith Siseman(KS), Ross Weddle(RW), Alan Bowlas (AB), Tracey Gillies(TG) , Bernard Shaw (BS)

**In Attendance:** Julien Lake (JL) Ian Guthrie (IG)

### **Apologies for absence**

Monica Burns, and Ivor Dixon

### **1 Minutes of meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

The minutes for the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016 were approved with the replacement of the word “demense” with “domain” in the second bullet point under item one. With this amendment the minutes were signed as a true record. The following matters were raised:

- JL advised that the public availability of minutes of meetings would only be considered after the Web site had been further developed
- There was nothing to report on the possible management arrangements for the Children’s Centre Nursery. An update will be given at a future meeting
- RW raised the question of the recruitment of new Board members but it was pointed out that this would be considered as part of the follow up action once the draft strategy was agreed

### **2 Finance Update**

IG issued a report which accompanied the draft 2015 Accounts which had been received from Community Accounting. IG advised that 2015 had been the first full year of the turbine income and because it had been a particularly windy year the income received exceeded expectations. As a result the unrestricted balances had increased significantly over the year. There were three important decisions which Board members need to decide upon and these were highlighted in IG’s report. Firstly there is the general level of balances that the Trust needs to carry forward in its accounts bearing in mind the irregular nature of the principal income source of the wind turbine. It was agreed that the target should be to have balances equivalent to 12months of expenditure. Secondly there was the question of whether a separate Repairs and Renewals Fund should be set up to cover costs associated with the William Elder Building. A number of items have been identified which require attention in the building and it is essential that our principal asset is maintained to the highest standard. It was agreed that a fund of £10k be set up. Thirdly there was the question of the extent of any writing down of the £39,697 investment held within the Trust accounts against the turbine project. It was reported that there were a number of options available to deal with this issue but it was agreed that, in view of the level of the 2015 income, that this amount be fully written down in the 2015 accounts.

The figures for 2015 were accepted and it was advised that the textual part of the accounts would be circulated for agreement thereby finalising the accounts for 2015.

IG advised that it was too early in 2016 to carry out a meaningful comparison on the budget/actual figures but this would be part of the standard report to the next meeting.

### **3 Trust Strategic Plan**

JL issued a draft of a Strategic Plan for 2016 to 2020 for the Trust. The document was based on discussions held at the recent away day and incorporated the views of the Chair and Vice Chair. The document was intentionally intended to give direction for the Trust and therefore excluded specific goals and outcomes. These particular items would be picked up in the next stage of the Plan.

A wide debate followed involving all members of the Board who were generally supportive of the Plan but felt that the next stage would be very important. This stage was seen as covering specific targets and outcomes but also in raising the profile of the Trust by communicating what we do through various media outlets. It was felt that this action would then increase our public awareness and could attract new members and Board members.

The Strategic Plan 2016 to 2020 was approved.

### **4 Berwick Barracks and Marina**

JL advised that the consultants working on the Berwick Barracks proposals were to issue their final report later this month but an interim briefing would be made to the Action Group on 10<sup>th</sup> March.

JL was able to share the briefing made to the Action Group with Board members and there were some quite fundamental changes proposed in the use of the site. The proposals included a cafe, increased retail facilities, holiday accommodation, business start up units and revamped museum locations and facilities.

JL advised that there are many issues to be resolved and the project is very much a long term proposal. He however felt that there were some very good ideas in the proposals but the ultimate development of the site would hinge on the availability of a great deal of public funding. When asked what the Trust may get out of the proposals JL felt that it was very difficult to assess this at the present time but felt that his involvement in the process had increased the Trust's profile and could perhaps lead to opportunities for the Trust to consider as the proposals were firmed up.

On the Marina JL advised that there was no progress on the Tweedmouth side and the proposal by Cllr Blackburn to develop a smaller marina on the Berwick side did not look as if it will progress. The report was noted.

### **5 CEO Report**

JL updated the Board on the following items

- A new contract has been signed with NCC for the Supporting Families contract for the next two years. Cindy Davey the staff member dealing with the current contract has resigned and the vacancy has been advertised
- A number of refurbishments in the William Elder Building have been actioned
- We have been invited to apply to the DWP Flexible Support Fund for funding to cover the Here For You costs for the next twelve months.
- The agent for the former Youngman's building has asked if we are interested in the restaurant part. A number of questions have been asked and a response from the agent is awaited.
- Chris Shaw was a director of Berwick Core and oversaw the applications for funding through the CoRE Legacy Fund. A replacement for Chris is required and it was suggested that the members be asked if any-one would be interested.
- Alan Geere is to review our recent press releases, web site and communications with a view to improving these for the future thereby increasing the Trust profile to attract new partners, staff, volunteers and business opportunities.

## **6 Any Other Business**

There were no matters raised.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19-00.