

BOARD MINUTES



Board Date 20th March 2017

Board Time: 5.00pm to 6.25pm

Present: Alan Bowlas (AB), Ross Weddle (RW)
 Monica Burns (MB), Jan Casson (JC) Keith
 Siseman (KS) Ann Short (AS)

In Attendance: Julien Lake (JL), Ian Guthrie (IG) plus Yvonne Hicks (YH) and John
 Fisher (JF) as observers.

Apologies for absence

There were apologies for absence from Ian Pope and Bernard Shaw

1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th January 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th January 2017 were approved and signed as a true record. The only matter raised was to confirm that Enterprise Car Club are looking for a location for a car club to be set up in the town.

RW asked if the draft minutes could be issued more quickly after meetings and this was agreed.

2 Finance and Accounts

IG issued the first draft of the figures for the 2016 accounts together with a report highlighting the important issues in the figures. He stressed that the Board were only asked to consider the figures in the draft accounts and that the textural content would be updated for the next meeting when he expected the full document to be agreed. IG then explained the three key account pages being the year-end Balance Sheet, the Statement of Financial Activities and the notes to the Financial Statements. These pages showed the activity during the year split between the various Unrestricted, Designated and Restricted Funds. The key fund is the unrestricted balance and this showed that there had been an increase in the general balance at the end of the year from £82,464 to £128,660. This represented a very healthy position but, in view of the irregular nature of income from the turbine which accounts for the majority of the

Trust's income, a significant balance is necessary to cushion the impact of any future reduction in income.

IG then explained the balances held on the various other funds within the accounts and highlighted the fact that there are ongoing issues with potential additional expenditure on repairs and maintenance of the William Elder Building. He recommended that the current provision held in the accounts at the end of the year of £10k be retained as a provision to supplement the £10k which is included in the current year budget for this item. This was agreed by the members. AB asked if there were any questions on the accounts and RW asked for the details of the make-up of the Governance costs. IG undertook to clarify the detail in the figure and to advise members. There were no further matters raised and IG was thanked for his work on the accounts and the accounts were approved.

3 Coastal Community Team

JL issued a report to update members on the development of a Coastal Community Team and Economic Plan for the town. As a condition of the funding the plan must be submitted to Government by 31st March. The report highlighted that initial work carried out by NCC had identified four broad themes of Productivity, Skills, International Tourism and Connectivity which were important for Berwick. The Trust have appointed Andy Ashcroft to research the project and he is carrying out interviews with local businesses and stakeholders before drawing the Plan together. There are a number of common strands being identified and an initial draft of the plan will be produced this week with a final version available by 31st March. It is expected, because of the tight timescale, that this Plan will be very much a work in progress document and fine-tuned over the coming months as lead partners are identified to push the Plan forward. The exact nature of the Trust's future involvement is yet to be determined but this will come back to a future meeting. JF commented that as a relative newcomer to the town he accepted that there were issues around the points highlighted but that generally the town was a good place to live and it needs to sell itself better.

The report was noted

College Project

JL issued a report to update members on the above project. He advised that the use of the building by the College was the preferred option but he has not got any firm commitment to this. His report gave broad details of

- The cost of acquiring the site
- Indicative costs to bring it into use as a college
- Possible funding assistance
- The cost of borrowing capital monies
- Potential rental income
- A possible Plan B if the College did not proceed
- A request for approval to proceed with the purchase of the building.

JL then expanded on the report and asked members for their views. A wide discussion followed with members very supportive of the idea but concerned about the lack of definitive commitment by the College and also around the financial viability of the options in Plan B. They generally felt that the College needed to provide greater clarity as to their intentions, ideally signing a conditional form of agreement. Trustees also asked for greater clarity on alternative uses of the building and the costs, income and risks associated with any "Plan B". JL was asked to advise the College of the decision and to ask, as a matter of urgency, that the College confirm their position on the project. A decision on the way forward and any potential secondary use of the building if the college decided not to proceed would then be taken dependent upon the response from the College.

4 Chief Executive Officer Report

JL advised the following items

- The turbine continues to operate well
- A Charitable Incorporated Organisation is being established at The Barracks with a view to assisting fundraising. The Trust continues to host meetings
- There has been no further information from NCC on the Children's Centre but the status quo works well for the Trust

- The Supporting Families contract has been extended for a further year with the Trust working with 12 families. In the last reporting period, the Trust achieved 7% of the entire County's output
- The William Elder Building continues to be very busy with regular and casual bookings. The Methodist Church will operate from the building from 21st May. There continue to be repairs required on the heating system and roof repairs costing £4,785 are necessary to hopefully resolve the long-standing leaking roof issue.
- The delegation from Fishguard as part of the town twinning project were here last week and generally the visit went very well. Once JL has been to Fishguard in early April a better assessment of the project can be made.
- Laura Ginn our apprentice is going to University and will leave in August. It is hoped to replace her with another Apprentice.
- The Here for You project is expected to provide some training to The Salvation Army under an agreement negotiated with them. There is a meeting scheduled in April with DWP about extension of the current funding for the service.

6 Any Other Business

There were no matters of other business and the meeting closed at 6-25pm