

## BOARD MINUTES



**Board Date** 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016

**Board Time:** 5.00pm to 7.10pm

**Present:** Ian Pope (IP), Keith Siseman (KS), Tracey Gillies (TG), Bernard Shaw (BS)

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

### **Apologies for absence**

Monica Burns and Alan Bowlas.

### **1 Minutes of meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

The minutes for the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were approved and signed as a true record. The following matters were raised

- JL advised that work on development of the Youngman's site was slowing down and that there was nothing to report
- There had been no volunteers to replace Chris Shaw as a director of Berwick Core

### **2 Finance Update**

IG issued a report which showed the actual income/expenditure to 30th April compared with the profiled budget figures to the same date. The net effect was net expenditure in the period of £1,530 compared with a budget forecast of £6,490. There were a number of variations in the income figure largely around the changed use and occupation of the building by casual users, the increased admin fee on the Child Care project and admin fees on two new projects. The principal differences on the expenditure side were in the project development, marketing and training budgets where there had been no expenditure. The reports were noted.

IG then explained that he had just received indicative figures for the turbine income for the six month period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 which would be paid later this month. He explained that the indicative figure of £41k was considerably less than had been anticipated but the reduction was due to the fact that in the period Feed in Tariff (FIT) income had only been received for the months of October and November 2015. He advised that when this income was received for the remaining four months of the period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 the total money payable under the turbine agreement would exceed that included in the budget. IG will pursue with Baxendale's the reason for the delay in receipt of the FIT money. It was agreed that once details of the payment made at the end of May were known Board members would be advised and IG/TG would carry out a full review of the 2016 budget for submission to the next Board meeting. IG also indicated that there were substantial bank balance receiving virtually no interest income. It was agreed that £75k be invested in a financial institution covered by the FSCS guarantee where the best interest rate could be obtained but which was subject to 3/6mths notice period.

JL had issued a report on staffing which was not separately included on the agenda. There were potential financial consequences in the report and it was agreed that it would be discussed under the

Finance Update. The first part of the report concerned the Trust's obligation to auto enrol staff into a pension scheme. This must be done by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 at the latest but it could be done earlier. JL explained various options/costs associated with the introduction and it was agreed the enrolment would commence in September or as soon as possible thereafter, that the initial employer contribution rate would be 2% and that the choice of the scheme be delegated to JL/TG and IG. The second part of the report covered the potential recruitment of an apprentice. JL advised that because of increasing workloads there were pressures on staff members and the recruitment of an apprentice would enable staff to be released from many of the day to day duties and to focus on higher value/more complex work. It was proposed in JL's report that the Trust offer £4.00 per hour in the first year as opposed to the minimum rate of pay for an apprentice of £3.30 per hour. This should help to secure a better quality of candidate. It was envisaged that the apprentice would progress through level 2 and level 3 stages which would increase the costs to the Trust in future years. Subject to satisfactory performance the apprentice could be offered full time employment on completion of his apprenticeship. JL and staff were thanked for their work over the period since JL's appointment when the staff compliment was reduced. The third part concerned a review of the existing staffing structure and remuneration. The structure had evolved over time often in response to funding opportunities and it was felt that a basic review of the overall structure was necessary. It was agreed that to start the process JL would provide updated Job descriptions and salary scales to IP/TG. Finally it was agreed that the Trust should advertise for appropriately qualified/experienced individuals who could be called on to assist with project work as and when required. The cost would be charged against the relevant project.

### **3 Discussion of Communications Review**

JL handed out copies of the overheads produced by Alan Geere for the Communications Strategy Review meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2016. It was felt that the review was generally positive but there were a number of areas where the Trust could improve. JL advised that work was already underway with the web site. It was agreed that JL would circulate electronically Alan Geere's presentation to all Board members, that Alan be invited to the next Board meeting and that the next Board meeting be focussed on the issues contained in Alan's report.

### **4 Draft Operational Plan**

Following the agreement of a series of objectives in the strategic plan JL issued a draft Operational Plan to establish the work the Trust would undertake in the next year. JL advised it was an early draft and work needed done on it and asked for comments. It was felt that the document was very important on the overview of where the focus of work would be for the next twelve months and it was important that the budget review highlighted earlier ensured that all areas were covered. JL expressed concern that the document lacked specifically measureable targets but it was felt that these were very difficult to quantify. JL agreed to continue with updating the document and to circulate a revised version for future consideration.

### **5 CEO Report**

JL updated the Board on the following items

- Cindy Davie is to remain as the staff member dealing with the Supporting Families contract

- The stair and conference room carpets have been replaced and some painting carried out on the building. It was agreed that the wooden screen at the front of the building needs replaced and work should be put in hand to do this.
- There has still been no response from DWP for funding for the Here For You project.
- The CoRE Legacy Fund is open to applications until 31<sup>st</sup> May
- The turbine continues to generate substantial income and the next payment is due before the end of May
- The Trust website is being revised in a number of ways.
- The text for the Director's Report in the annual accounts has not yet been completed but will be done so.
- We have recently looked at the Brown Bear site but will not be pursuing that option. We have also been looking at another commercial property with a possible partnership with a local businessman for a training restaurant with a micro brewery. This is not likely to be pursued and members felt that the principal of a micro brewery did not sit comfortably with our ethos.
- The next meeting of the Barracks Working Group is scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> May.
- The option to take on the management of the Berwick Children's Centre Nursery is very slow. We are awaiting information from NCC but in the meantime we are gaining a better understanding of the day to day operational issues which need investigated.
- JL advised that he is now Chair of the Housing Sub Group on the Neighbourhood Plan.

## **6 Any Other Business**

KS asked that in view of the income coming to the Trust from the turbine and the lack of a new project for the Trust to develop did the amount of money we have in balances become an issue. He was assured that at the present time the balances were in accordance with our policy and that there was no issue. It was however accepted that it is important that a new major project is identified.

IP confirmed that the meetings for the foreseeable future would continue to be held on a Monday. He also indicated that he would like to stand down as Chair at the next AGM but members requested that he reconsider this decision.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19-10.