

BOARD MINUTES



Board Date 15th May 2017

Board Time: 5.00pm to 6.50pm

Present: Ian Pope (IP) Alan Bowlas (AB), Ross
Weddle (RW), Jan Casson (JC) Keith
Siseman (KS), Ann Short (AS)

In Attendance: Julien Lake (JL), Ian Guthrie (IG) plus John Fisher (JF) as observer.

Apologies for absence

There were apologies for absence from Monica Burns. IP advised the Board that Bernard Shaw had decided to retire from the Trust. Bernard was expected to attend the meeting at some time when formal thanks would be given.

1 Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th March 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th March 2017 were approved and signed as a true record with deletion of the word "very" in the sentence "A wide discussion followed with members very..." in the item headed College Project. There were no other matters raised.

2 College Project

JL issued updated papers on the potential purchase of The Old Brewery in Tweedmouth and the various issues which this will raise. Essentially JL advised that if the project was to proceed it was important that the Trust acquire the building as ownership made access to various funding sources possible and sent a clear message to the College, as potential tenants, of our commitment to them. It would also mitigate the risk of the owner ceasing to make the building available.

JL gave indicative financial figures for the project but stressed that these were dependent on a number of factors and potentially subject to change. He also highlighted a potential alternative use of the building if the College proposal did not materialise.

The board members discussed the proposal in great detail and raised a number of points. They agreed that the purchase would represent a risk to the Trust as full costings of the internal works required on the building were not yet available and there was no certainty that the College would enter into a formal agreement to become tenants of the premises. Members did feel that there was such a gap in the present College offer in town that steps need to be taken to rectify this and that the proposal offered a realistic opportunity to achieve this. The fall back proposal of alternative use of the premises gave reassurance that if the college proposal did not materialise then there was still a potential viable use of the premises.

Following the debate each member of the Board was asked to give their view on whether they were in favour of agreeing to the purchase of the site and it was the unanimous view of each member that the Trust should proceed with the purchase. The Board therefore agreed that JL be instructed to proceed with the acquisition of the premises. (Note AB left the meeting during the debate on this item but gave his approval to acquisition prior to his departure).

3 Finance and Accounts

IG issued the usual report comparing the actual income and expenditure to 30th April 2017 with the profiled budget to the same date. He explained that there was additional income because of the wider usage of the WEB both by long term licence holders and casual users. On the expenditure side there are a number of budget heads on which there had been no or very little expenditure and as a result of this and the increased income the budgeted deficit at 30th April was £4,477 less than projected. IG also advised that the turbine income due to be received later this month is likely to be slightly higher than the budget figure.

JF requested that for future reports the variance between actual and budget figures should be stated for each heading and that the expenditure headings should have a classification as to whether they are unavoidable or have some discretion. These changes would make the report more meaningful and were agreed. IG also advised that

a review of the 2017 budget would be carried out before the next meeting to reflect changes since the original budget was approved. The report was noted.

IG had issued drafts of the Chair and Trustees reports for the 2016 accounts and it was agreed that any comments should be made to IG by the end of the week otherwise the drafts would be included in the final copy of the 2016 accounts.

4 Quayside Discussion

KS gave a verbal report on a recent visit he had made to Amble and the tourist/business offer which was available in the harbour area. He felt that there were many ideas which could be incorporated in the Quayside area in Berwick without the need for major capital resources being required. He was particularly impressed with the pods which were situated there and from which a wide selection of local artisans traded. He felt a similar arrangement in Berwick would be very popular with many of the local artisan businesses. There would also be the possibility to link up with or expand the Mouth of the Tweed and the Food Festivals and the possibility of some crowdfunding or sponsorship for the pods. He accepted that he had not fully thought through the options but felt it was potentially a quick win option to utilise the area where there was an increasing footfall.

JL advised that as part of the Coastal Communities Fund there could be funding available and there was perhaps an opportunity to flesh out some of the issues through that mechanism. Members were enthusiastic about the ideas KS suggested and agreed that it was something which should be explored further.

5 Chief Executive Officers Report

JL issued his usual update report and advised of the following items

- As reported by IG the turbine continues to operate well and broadly in line with forecast
- The Barracks project has reached its funding target for the work required on the round one HLF application and work will begin soon

- NCC have advised that they will be undertaking a procurement exercise in relation to the Children's Centre nursery service but details are awaited. JL will circulate details once they become available.
- The Supporting Families contract is going well with involvement in a number of new families.
- The roof repairs in the WEB are now complete and we are looking at replacement costs for tables. The Methodist Church are to use the premises as their base from Sunday 21st May and generally the accommodation is being widely used.
- The Town Twinning report has been submitted to Carnegie Trust and their views are awaited. JL reported that the visit to Fishguard was very worthwhile with a number of ideas which were relevant to Berwick.
- Donna Dickson who has led on the community work on the Four Housing project will leave her employment on 31st May. Discussions are ongoing with Four Housing regarding the format of the continued support with the possibility of the Here for You service providing employment services advice. An update will be given once the details are finalised.
- The funding opportunities for the Here for You service through DWP are changing. From 1st July the payment of a block grant is being replaced by a system whereby organisations offer their services and the local Job Centres tap into these offers for the organisation to provide the service. Re-imburement is results based and careful consideration will need to be given to our pricing structure to ensure that our costs are fully recovered.
- The Town Council have requested the Trust to take on responsibility for understanding the feasibility of establishing moorings at the Quayside. A company called Intermarine are to conduct studies on water depths and flow and to undertake initial design specifications. Carol Geere will examine some of the operational management and insurance issues.
- Due to the elections no meetings of the Coastal Communities Team to look at the Economic Plan work have been held but they will be arranged shortly.

6 Any Other Business

There were three matters raised. Firstly JC raised the issue of the small numbers now attending the Saturday Club and no one on the Play Outreach projects. JL is to

investigate. Secondly JL advised that he had received a letter from D Blackburn looking for the Trust's support in the 1000 year celebrations of the battle of Carham project. It was agreed that further details were required. Thirdly it was proposed that John Fisher who had attended two meetings as an observer be co-opted as a Trustee. This was unanimously agreed.

Finally at the close of the meeting Bernard Shaw attended. He was warmly thanked both by IP and JL for his work with the Trust over many years. They both commented on Bernard's dedication to the Trust. His overarching desire was to ensure that the benefit to the wider community the Trust serves was always foremost in any decisions taken by the Trust. His wisdom and understanding on many issues will be a great miss to the Trust and every-one wished Bernard and his wife Margaret the very best for the future as he takes a lower profile. In reply Bernard thanked all the Trustees and staff members for their support over the years since the Trust was formed and how much he had enjoyed working with the Trust in making Berwick a better place to live and work. In appreciation of his work a painting was presented to Bernard on behalf of the Trust.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 18-50