

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

MINUTE of MEETING of the CHAMBERS
INSTITUTION TRUST held in the Burgh Hall,
High Street, Peebles on 21 August 2019 at 3.00
p.m.

Present:- Councillors K. Chapman (Chairman), H. Anderson, S Bell, S Haslam, E Small,
R Tatler.

In Attendance:- Chief Financial Officer, Project Manager (S. Renwick), Estates Surveyor (A.
Scott), Solicitor (E. Moir), Property Officer (G. Smith), Democratic Services
Team Leader.

1. **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chairman varied the order of business as shown on the agenda and the Minute reflects the order in which the items were considered at the meeting.

2. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 15 April 2019.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute.

3. **TOUR OF BUILDING COMPLEX**

Officers accompanied Members on a tour of the building. With regard to the Burgh Hall, the Property Officer commented on proposals to upgrade the kitchen area, replace the curtains on the stage, restore the main hall to its former state (including removal of false ceiling) and repair the roof above the entrance hall to prevent leaks during heavy rain. The cost for restoring the main hall had been around £70k several years ago. Members asked for details of usage figures for the hall. Members looked at the areas covered by the Page and Park proposals including the options for installing a lift. The Project Manager advised that the costs were in the region of £10m for full refurbishment including demolition or £4m without the demolition. It was noted that applications for external funding would be prepared by officers. Maintenance costs for the building were currently being met by the Council rather than the Trust.

DECISION

AGREED to obtain current usage figures from Live Borders for the various parts of the building.

4. **MONITORING FOR THE 12 MONTHS TO 31 MARCH 2019**

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Financial Officer providing details of the income and expenditure for the Chambers Institute Trust Fund for the year 2018/19 including balance sheet values as at 31 March 2019 and proposed budget for 2019/20. Appendix 1 provided the actual income and expenditure for 2018/19 and showed a surplus of £15,200 for the year and a projected surplus of £10,578 for 2019/20. Appendix 2 provided a balance sheet value as at 31 March 2019 showing a decrease in the reserves of £41,795. Appendix 3 provided a breakdown of the property portfolio showing actual rental income and property expenditure to 31 March 2019 where applicable and the 2018/19 depreciation charge. Appendix 4 showed the value of the Kames Capital Fund to 31 March 2019. The

Chief Financial Officer highlighted the main points in the report and asked Members if they wished to invest a further £150k with the Kames Fund. Members unanimously agreed to approve this proposal. In response to a question on how the Trust would develop a financial plans for any works, the Chief Financial Officer advised that the Trust should instruct the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure and himself to prepare a POCB for consideration as part of the next Capital Budget planning process.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) to note the actual income and expenditure for 2018/19 detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (b) the proposed budget for 2019/20 as shown in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (c) to note the final balance sheet value to 31 March 2019 shown in Appendix 2 to the report;**
- (d) to note the summary of the property portfolio detailed in Appendix 3 to the report;**
- (e) to note the current position of the investment in the Kames Capital Fund shown in Appendix 4 to the report; and**
- (f) to invest a further £150k from the cash balance into the Kames Capital Fund.**

5. PROPERTY UPDATE

- 5.1 The Estates Surveyor commented on the current rental payments being charged for the various spaces and noted that there were some anomalies and it was agreed that it would be helpful if the Estates Officer could carry out a full rent review which also highlighted the different types of lease with an initial report to be presented at the next meeting of the Trust.
- 5.2 With regard to carrying out some immediate works such as the refurbishment of the kitchen or replacement of the curtains in the Burgh Hall it was agreed that no decisions were taken until Live Borders had provided usage figures as it was possible that a different type of kitchen might be required.
- 5.3 The possibility of working with the Eastgate Theatre, who had previously expressed an interest in using the Burgh Hall, was also discussed as another avenue to be investigated in due course.
- 5.4 With reference to the Page and Park Report it was agreed that the works would have to be undertaken on a phased basis and three phases were suggested. Members agreed that officers be asked to produce an outline Business Case with both financial and cultural input.
- 5.5 The need for a communications strategy to ensure that the public were aware of the plans was suggested and it was agreed that a representative from the Communications Team be invited to the next meeting.

DECISION

AGREED that:-

- (a) that a full review of existing rents and leases be carried out with an initial report to the next meeting of the Trust:-**

- (b) that usage figures for the various spaces be obtained from Live Borders;
- (c) that officers be instructed to prepare an outline Business Case based on a phased approach to carrying out the works in the Page and Park report; and
- (d) that a Communications Officer be invited to the next meeting of the Trust.

6. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

DECISION

AGREED that future meetings be held in the Council Chamber at Rosetta Road at 3 p.m. on the following dates:-

Wednesday, 20 November 2019;

Wednesday, 26 February 2020; and

Wednesday, 27 May 2020

7. **URGENT BUSINESS**

Under Section 50B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Chairman was of the opinion that the item dealt with in the following paragraph should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency, in view of the need to make an early decision and to keep Members informed.

8. **TOMMY SILHOUETTES/WAR MEMORIAL**

The Chairman advised that the Tommy Silhouettes had been removed from the quadrangle and although they were the property of the British Legion they were currently being stored by the Council. With regard to the future planting of the beds in the quadrangle it was noted that this could be funded by the Trust. However, Councillor Bell advised that a recent Community Council meeting the possibility of a sponsor had been raised. With regard to the removal of the trees and where replacements should be planted it was agreed that there was some confusion about whether they should be planted on the existing site or at a new location. It was agreed that Mr Stark be contacted before a final decision was taken.

DECISION

AGREED:-

- (a) that the Trust would fund the planting of the beds in the Quadrangle if a sponsor could not be identified; and
- (b) that the Chairman contact Mr Stark regarding the removal and replanting of the trees.

The meeting concluded at 4.35 p.m.