

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

MINUTE of MEETING of the CHAMBERS
INSTITUTION TRUST held in the Council
Chamber, Rosetta Road, Peebles on 20
November 2019 at 3.00 p.m.

Present:- Councillors K. Chapman (Chairman), S Bell, E Small, R Tatler.
Apologies:- Councillors H. Anderson, S. Haslam
In Attendance:- Chief Financial Officer, Project Manager (S. Renwick), Estates Manager,
Solicitor (E. Moir), Democratic Services Team Leader.

1. MINUTE

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the meeting held on 21 August 2019.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Minute.

2. MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 21 August 2019, copies of the usage figures provided by Live Borders for the Museum and Library were circulated. Figures for the Burgh hall were not available. The Chairman advised that he would contact the Chief Executive to see if these could be obtained.
- 2.2 With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of 21 August 2019, Councillor Tatler commented on an article which had appeared in the Peeblesshire News regarding the poor state of the electrics in the Burgh Hall which was going to impact on concerts in the hall and that this had not been mentioned as part of the tour held at the last meeting. The Estates Manager advised he was aware of the problem, which was the responsibility of Live Borders, and it was as serious as indicated in the newspaper article. He undertook to make sure the matter was rectified. The conditions of the curtains was also mentioned and it was not clear from the agreement with Live Borders who was responsible for their replacement. Members asked for a proposal to replace the curtains.
- 2.3 With reference to paragraph 5.5 of the Minute of 21 August 2019, it was reported that unfortunately due to late notification no member of the Communications team had been available to attend. However, they were very happy to meet with Members at another time to discuss the needs of the Trust.

DECISION

AGREED that:-

- (a) the Chairman contact the Chief Executive of Live Borders regarding usage figures for the Burgh Hall;
- (b) the Estates Manager arrange to repair the electrics at the Burgh Hall and provide a proposal for the replacement of the stage curtains, while ascertaining who was financially responsible for these matters; and
- (c) that the Trust Members meet with the Communications Team at a mutually suitable time.

3. **EXISTING RENTS AND LEASES**

With reference to paragraph 5.1 of the Minute of 21 August 2019, there had been circulated copies of a joint report by the Service Directors Regulatory Services and Assets & Infrastructure providing an overview of existing rents and leases. It was proposed that a rent review be carried out and the service charge also be reviewed. With regard to the area occupied by Scottish Borders Council, the Chief Financial Officer advised that when the Trust was brought back into Council control in 2015 the leasing agreement ceased on the basis that the Council would be responsible for the maintenance of the building. In response to questions on matters such as whether the Trust could have a lease with the Council and the purpose of the Trust, Ms Moir undertook to ascertain the exact powers of the Trust in terms of its relationship with the Council and would report back at the next meeting. With regard to the unlet spaces it was noted that following the success of the Tweed Valley Tourism BID they would occupy the space previously let to VisitScotland. The Estates Manager would confirm what charge would be made. The validity of the existing sub-lease with the CAB would also be checked in light of the Chief Financial Officer's comments about the head lease having ceased to operate.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

- (a) **to instruct the Council's Estate Manager to proceed with formal rent reviews and a review of the service charge of those premises where they were due;**
- (b) **that clarification of the purpose and powers of the Trust would be provided at the next meeting; and**
- (c) **that the position of leases for the Tweed Valley Tourism BID and CAB would be reported at the next meeting.**

4. **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.

5. **CHAMBERS INSTITUTION QUADRANGLE**

The Chief Financial Officer advised that CGI were involved in a national tree planting scheme which included the Borders and could be asked to plant replacement trees in the quadrangle. It was also reported that a request had been received from the Community Council for funds to pay for the planting of flowers in the quadrangle and it was agreed that the Trust would meet costs up to a maximum of £1,000 for the next year.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

- (a) **that the possibility of CGI providing trees be investigated; and**
- (b) **a maximum of £1,000 be provided for the planting of the flower beds in the quadrangle.**

6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Members agreed that to meet the budget planning timescale it would be necessary to bring forward their meeting currently scheduled for 26 February 2020 to 31 January 2020.

DECISION

AGREED that the next meeting of the Trust be held on Thursday, 31 January 2020 in Council Headquarters following the meeting of Council that day.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

7. **DECISION**

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in the Appendix to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

8. **CHAMBER INSTITUTION PROJECT BUSINESS CASE**

Members considered the project business case and agreed to proceed with phase 1, improvements to the Burgh hall.

The meeting concluded at 4.20 p.m.