

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

MINUTE of MEETING of the
CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST held
via Microsoft Teams on 19 October 2022
at 4.00 p.m.

Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chair), D. Begg, M. Douglas, J. Pirone, E
Small, V. Thomson.
In Attendance:- Chief Legal Officer, Treasury Business Partner, Estates Strategy
Manager, Estates Surveyor (T. Hill), Localities Development Co-
ordinator (K. Harrow), Democratic Services Team Leader.

1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 14 September 2022.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chair.

2. **BENEFICIARIES GROUP FEEDBACK**

- 2.1 The Chair provided a summary on the most recent meeting of the Group held the previous evening. The notes from Kenny Harrow were to be circulated on completion. Funding of £100,000 had been awarded in October 2021 by the Government's Place Based Investment Fund to be spent in the financial year 2021-2022. The Beneficiaries Group agreed with the removal of the suspended ceiling. Clarification was sought on whether the grant funding would also cover the cost of necessary modifications to the heating system. It was reported that as heat rose into the newly exposed ceiling space, there was a need for fans to push the heat back down into the hall. Further discussion was to be had on this matter between the Group and the Estates department and it was requested that a member of the Estates department be present at their next meeting to answer questions. A member of the Estates department staff had been identified to lead the work and would return to work on 7 November. A date in the week beginning 14 November 2022 had been suggested.
- 2.2 A copy of the service level agreement between the Chambers Institution Trust and Live Borders was requested. Ms McKinlay responded that members were entitled to see parts of the contract pertaining to their arrangement but that a check around commercial sensitivities would be needed first.
- 2.3 Fiona Colton, Museums and Galleries Manager for Live Borders, had proposed two tours of the Chambers Institute be organised to accommodate a maximum of 17 persons on 15 November from 3:30-5:30 and 6:30-8:30. These were open to both Elected Members and the public. Page/Park Architects would attend and there would follow a question and answer session to gather feedback on the proposed development of the building. In the event of oversubscription, further tours would be possible but Page/Park would not be in attendance.

It was noted that public consultation and involvement of the Beneficiaries Group was key to the proposed works. To that end, there was discussed the creation of a temporary mobile exhibition to be situated in the Burgh Hall. Six information board pop ups were to be produced along with the portable display frames. In addition, promotional material (A3 posters, outdoor posters, A4 flyers) were to be made and hard copies of feedback forms for the public consultation exercise. It was suggested that a less formal method of capturing responses on a Post-It wall also be used. A further mechanism for gathering feedback from those not in attendance would be required, possibly a web based or email submission.

The urgency of the deadline for graphics and text submission of 23 October 2022 was noted. The 27th November 2pm-5pm was identified as a preferred date for the consultation exercise as this would coincide with the Peebles Christmas Lights Switch On. Page/Park would not be in attendance but Councillors were encouraged to do so. The Chair had proposed a budget of £5,000 and this was agreed by the other members. It was noted that Fiona Colton be invited to all subsequent meetings of the Chambers Institution Trust.

- 2.4 In response to a question about the grant monies awarded, it was acknowledged that the funding award may be time sensitive but that it may be sufficient for the works to have begun before the end of 2022. This was to be clarified. It was discussed that a 'rescoping' of the quote for repairs to the ornate plasterwork would be required and that sourcing a suitably qualified sub-contractor would be difficult and costly. The quote for other construction work had been accepted but given the time that had elapsed since and the fluctuating prices, supply chain issues and labour availability, it would be unlikely that the work would be completed by the end of 2022. In response to a question about the duration of the program of works, it was noted that future hall bookings would be impacted and the user groups would be informed and relocated to other premises for the duration of the works; a period of 3-4 months.

DECISION

AGREED to the allocation of £5000 for the consultation exercise/exhibition

3. PROPERTY UPDATE

- 3.1 The Estate Surveyor advised that work around the installation of Wi-Fi in the Burgh Hall was moving along. It was reported that Tweed Valley BID had occupied the vacant unit previously used by the Tourist Information Centre had begun the process of renovation. A request had been received from Bonnie Peebles to reinstate hanging baskets in the quadrangle. Brackets were in situ at present. The proposal was supported in principle subject to the Group being asked to consider sustainable planting instead of bedding plants and that they provide the ongoing.
- 3.2 In response to a question about the readiness of the quadrangle for Remembrance Sunday, it was reported that the cosmetic appearance currently is and will be of a high standard. Minor stonework repairs were needed and would be addressed following the commemorations.
- 3.3 In response to a question regarding the replacement of the Queen's portrait with one of King Charles III, it was acknowledged that a portrait is required to be hung during civil ceremonies. Clarification was to be sought as to whom the responsibility lay with obtaining and financing the portrait; the Registrar's department as tenant or SBC as landlord. It was noted that an official portrait had not yet been released.
- 3.4 With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute of 3 August 2022, the Chair asked if there was an update on the moving of the Boer War Memorial. Mr. Smith, Property Maintenance Officer advised that the Councils Heritage Officer had no objections to it

being relocated in the main foyer. He would now ascertain when the relocation from the School Brae Community Hub was required. The Chair advised he would also raise with the Beneficiaries Group.

DECISION

(a) **NOTED the update.**

(b) **AGREED to the reinstatement of hanging baskets in the quadrangle by Bonnie Peebles.**

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.

5. **FIRE EXITS – FENCING AT NEWBY COURT**

It was reported that there was a recurring issue with anti-social behaviour and vandalism in the vicinity of the gable end of the craft shops on School Brae. It was suggested that a further fence be erected in line with the buildings that prevented such gatherings in that space. It was acknowledged that a fire risk assessment was required and the emergency exit routes from the Burgh Hall and the Museum be maintained. The risk assessment and quotes for the work were to be provided at the next meeting.

DECISION

NOTED the position and AGREED that a fire risk assessment to be carried out and quotes for fence and appropriate emergency exit gates be obtained to circulate at the next meeting

6. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**

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 the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

7. **MINUTE**

The private section of the Minute of the meeting held on 14 September 2022 was approved.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed to change the date of the meeting to 23 November at 3:30 p.m.

The meeting concluded at 5 p.m.