

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL CHAMBERS INSTITUTION TRUST

MINUTES of Meeting of the CHAMBERS
INSTITUTION TRUST held via Microsoft Teams
on Wednesday, 23rd November, 2022 at 3.30
pm

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Present:- Councillors R. Tatler (Chair); D. Begg, M. Douglas, J. Pirone, E. Small
Apologies:- Councillor V. Thomson
In Attendance:- Chief Legal Officer, Treasury Business Partner (S. Wilson), Estates
Surveyor (T. Hill), Property Officer (G. Smith), S. Milne (Live Borders),
F. Colton (Live Borders), C. Renton (GB Technologies), Democratic
Services Team Leader, Trainee Democratic Services Officer

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1. **MINUTE**

There had been circulated copies of the Minute of the Meeting held on 23 November 2022.

DECISION

APPROVED for signature by the Chair.

2. **BENEFICIARIES GROUP FEEDBACK**

- 2.1 The Chair provided an update from the meeting on 13 December 2022. It was agreed that The Bridge would provide administration support for the Beneficiaries Group at a cost of £600 per annum. The Chair sought the approval of this funding which was unanimously agreed.
- 2.2 With reference to paragraph 2.4 of the Minute of 23 November 2022, the facilitator brief had now been completed and approved by the Beneficiaries Group. There followed a discussion on the identification and appointment of a facilitator. An Appointment sub-group had been formed to put the project out to tender and thereafter to present a shortlist to the Beneficiaries Group and the Chambers Institution Trust members, with an expectation that one would be appointed by February 2023. The Chair proposed a budget of £15,000. This was agreed by the Trust and members of the sub-group were confirmed as Councillors Pirone and Tatler, Crick Carlton, Sam Coe, and Fiona Colton (Live Borders).
- 2.3 With reference to paragraph 3.1 of the Minute of 23 November 2022, it had been noted that news of the Levelling Up Fund award was expected in early January 2023. The project's completion date of the end of April and into May 2023 was dependant on the settlement from the Levelling Up Fund.
- 2.4 With reference to paragraph 2.1 of the minute of 23 November 2022, the Chair reported that there was to be a meeting on 15 December 2022 of the Consultation sub-group to discuss how to widen the geographical spread of the consultation process. Councillors Tatler, Councillor Pirone and Tatler, Kenny Harrow, Fiona Colton (Live Borders) and Sam Coe were confirmed as members of this sub-group.

- 2.5 In response to a question regarding the existence of floor plans of the Burgh Hall, Tricia Hill confirmed that she would locate any drawings, along with estates records. These plans were to be made available to the architects Page\Park in the event that indicative proposals for a mezzanine floor in the Burgh Hall were commissioned. It was agreed that this matter be further discussed at the next meeting.
- 2.6 With reference to paragraph 3.1 of the Minute of 23 November 2022, Gareth Smith reported an additional allocation of funds was required to meet the inflated cost of removing the suspended ceiling in the Burgh Hall. The funding requested was as follows:- £8,075 for roof work; approximately £1700 for security arrangements with Border Safeguard; an amount for scaffolding for which an estimate was pending. Mr Smith also awaited an electrician's quote for the cost of installing dimmer switches to the wall lights and chandeliers. Members agreed to award the proposed amount of £15,000.
- 2.7 Gareth Smith confirmed the process of engaging contractors. All tenders were awarded to approved, local contractors with prior experience of the premises where possible. There were sometimes unavoidable limitations on the number of contractors available to undertake work; a shortage of workforce or contractors already operating at full capacity. The Chief Legal Officer reminded members of the importance of the retention and maintenance of all documentation and that the appropriate level of scrutiny was undertaken.
- 2.8 With reference to the paragraph 3 of the Minute of 14 September 2022, it was agreed that a sub group be formed to consider the matter of the colour scheme and possible window treatments/alterations (secondary glazing). The members of the sub-group were confirmed as Councillor Tatler, Sam Coe, Lorna McCulloch (The Bridge) and Anne Snoddy (Peebles Community Council).
- 2.9 It was suggested by Fiona Colton that any re-opening event planned could coincide with the 140th anniversary of the death of William Chambers. This was to be discussed at a future meeting.
- 2.10 The Chair sought the approval for an observer member from the Beneficiaries Group to be invited to join the Chambers Institution Trust. The Chief Legal Officer confirmed the appointment of an observer member with no voting rights was allowable within the Scheme of Administration for the Chambers Institution Trust. The proposal was approved unanimously. The observer member would be selected at the next meeting of the Beneficiaries Group.

DECISION

(a) NOTED the update.

(b) AGREED to approve the following costs:-

- (i) £600 to meet the annual cost of administration support for the Beneficiaries Group;**
- (ii) £15,000 to fund the identification and appointment of a facilitator;**
- (iii) £15,000 to meet the increased building costs, security arrangements, scaffolding and lighting modifications; and**
- (iv) the appointment of an observer member with no voting rights from the Beneficiaries Group to the Chambers Institution Trust.**

3. **PROPERTY UPDATE**

Tricia Hill provided an update to Members. With reference to paragraph 2.3 of the Minute of 23 November 2022, it was reported that a simple Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) was insufficient. It was recommended that this task be commissioned from a qualified surveyor along with a subsequent energy efficiency survey of the estate. Tricia Hill had already agreed to obtain quotes for a survey of all the buildings to determine their state of repair; this EPC task could be added to the survey where possible. It was confirmed that there was currently no insulation in the roof of the Burgh Hall and the retrofitting of insulation would be problematic, particularly given the steepness of the pitch and the large surface area. The conflict between the desire for historical restoration and the need for cost effective energy efficiency solutions was acknowledged. Further consultation on this issue was needed and Gareth Smith agreed to research alternatives that might be available. It was agreed that access to survey the roof space via scaffolding was possible provided it was co-ordinated with on-site contractors. Fiona Colton agreed to share contacts information with Estates officers that they might examine other exemplar projects currently being undertaken.

DECISION

NOTED the update

4. **WI-FI ACCESS POINTS IN BURGH HALL**

With reference to paragraph 3.2 of the Minute of 23 November 2022, Sheena Milne provided further information on the proposed Wi-Fi access points for the Burgh Hall. Ms Milne confirmed that the project had been awarded to GB Technologies as a consequence of them already being contracted to provide services to the Library and Museum Service. Craig Renton, a representative of GB Technologies confirmed the following:- the original brief had been to quote for Wi-Fi access points (WAP) to cover the interior of the Burgh Hall only, which resulted in two WAPs being recommended; Wi-Fi coverage in the Registrar's Office would need to be investigated, though the need for an additional WAP was to be expected; and in order to achieve Wi-Fi coverage in the whole of the Quadrangle, an exterior WAP would be required and may be prohibited by the listed building status of the estate. Mr Renton agreed to provide an updated quote that included Wi-Fi coverage to the Registrar's Office and the Quadrangle to the next meeting. Fiona Colton confirmed that there was at present no public Wi-Fi access within the Library and Museum Service. However, a pending refresh of the hardware, peripherals and network by CGI would include consideration of a public network via The People's Network rather than Live Borders.

DECISION

AGREED that an updated quote be obtained from GB Technologies for Wi-Fi coverage to the Registrar's Office and the Quadrangle.

5. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 18 January 2023 at 4pm.

The meeting concluded at 4pm.