

Chambers Institute Beneficiaries

Meeting held 27th February 2024 on MS Teams

Present:

Cllr Robin Tatler, SBC (Chair)
Lorna McCullough, Borders Community Action (Minutes)
Cllr Marshall Douglas
Cllr Julie Perone
Cllr Viv Thomson
Cllr Drummond Begg
Sam Coe, Peebles Civic Society
Laura Scott, Peebles Pensioners
Gareth Smith, SBC
Peter Maudsley, PCC
Crick Carleton, PCT
Ian Buckingham
Chris Clarke, Eastgate Theatre
Chris Whitmore, Clovenfords CC
Malcolm Bruce
Gill Westwood
Lady Stewartby
David Brackenridge JBSM
Martin Quirke

Apologies

Cllr Eric Small
Geoffrey Hamilton

- 1. Welcome/Introductions**
- 2. Levelling Up Bid – update**

Awaiting update from UK Government, project plan needed soon after that. Funding needs to be committed by the project by the end of March 2026.

Ian Buckingham – The John Buchan Story Museum. Positive that the Chambers Institute will be developed. Everyone in the JBSM is aware and prepared to provide feedback as to how it might progress. Transition period is a key issue, if location is moved, how will that affect visitors and volunteers?

Gill Westwood from CAB – Welcomed the meeting and found it useful to have conversations at this time in the process. Viv Thomson confirmed CAB will be moved out of the Chambers Institute and following conversations with John Currie in SBC Estates they are seeking alternative venues. A central location is needed that can provide private space.

One other tenant in the flat above the museum needs to be involved in the conversations. SBC Estates will have contact details.

3. Update from Jason Dyer on work so far, also Project Vision Workshop proposal, decision required.

Robin went through the vision in summary, ground floor main entrance, atmospheric and family friendly, possible café space with Go Tweed Valley part of the vision. Box office booking, possibly in joint partnership with Eastgate Theatre. Visitor facilities separate to staffed areas. Aim to ensure building is accessible and used as much as possible. Lifts to 1st and 2nd floors. Registers Office would need to be preserved and private separate to public busy areas. Possibly move JBSM location.

1st floor museum space and library, modern and accessible. Specialist bronze age and possible museum of the written word and JBSM. Chambers room with plaster freeze.
2nd floor, art gallery
3rd floor general storage as it is now.

Burgh hall – look at creating access from the main building with a mezzanine level. Feasibility study to look at how this can be done. Precedence Black Adder church a good example to look at, with similar dimensions. This would make it easier to heat, improve sound and increase space which can increase income.

Courtyard – keep as is, as much as possible.

Peter expressed concern at competition with Eastgate Theatre and referenced use of the Rosetta Road SBC building, noted it had more tenants now and few available spaces.

Laura Scott from Peebles Pensioners expressed concerns at what has been spent on the hall already to then change it by introducing a mezzanine level. She believes this would finish the PP group as no other alternative space suitable to move while the work can be done. The work done so far was in line with funding available at the time with the aim to remove the suspended ceiling, whereas now further funding is available to achieve greater space. Recognise the challenge of finding alternative accommodation. Phased approach will be taken to minimise disruption, hopefully other space will be available by the time the hall development is being done.

4. Governance issues – working group?

Needs a chair led by the community, not by Robin. Deadline next meeting to appoint new chair from beneficiaries group as needed ahead of the project starting.

Cllr Begg reinforced this asset belongs to everyone in the community, Cllrs as trustees have different roles and do from time adhere to corporate responsibilities.

Management team needs to link to the Trust and structure of the beneficiaries group, particularly chair needs to sit with the trustees on the trust in decision making. Legal structure of the trust needs reviewed in relation to the personal liability, sits separate to SBC.

Professional project team will be in place to manage the project separate to these structures.

5. Burgh Hall update – acoustics, decoration etc.

Gareth Smith from SBC volunteers to come along an update at these meetings.

Curtains all now in place

Balcony outer window at the turret is fitted, with the option of added curtain over the balcony £1200 estimate, leave for now and monitor heating in the hall.

Joiner will fit vents to pipe boxing to allow more circulation into the hall.

Sany Robertson happy with acoustics plans, order can be placed. Panels are white, can these be painted to match the wall colour?

Peebles Pensioners happy with last meeting, hall was warm. Request to avoid works for the next meeting on 20th March.

6. Artwork display – update

Price for art work cabinet in foyer area now received and is reasonable. £2633 plus VAT. Plus painting £200-300. Legal agreement with artist, Susan Mitchell needs to be put in place. Trustees will discuss costs and make decision.

The artwork is concertina stand up 12 feet long, painting of the whole of both sides of Peebles High Street. 360 degree view of Tweed Bridge still for discussion, Trustees to view and make a decision, possibly inter change to avoid increased display costs.

7. Any other updates

An enquiry to lease the vacant shop has been made which will be considered (previously 'Della's').

Peebles Place Making - Spaces in Peebles needs to be reviewed holistically, multiple venues being used for different and similar activities, not clear where is for what. Organisations also occupying commercial properties and paying commercial rents – a more sustainable approach is needed to maximise the use of community spaces by community organisations. This approach when looking at the use of the Chambers Institute is needed and welcomed.

8. Date of Next meeting

Monday 18th March in person in the Burgh hall to go through the plans and vision, possibly as a drop in. Anyone with queries or concerns before then can drop robin an email - robin.tatler@scotborders.gov.uk