

Paper for the Chambers Institution Trust meeting on 25 May 2016

Chambers Institution, Peebles: Community Consultation

Purpose of paper

This paper is to update the Chambers Institution Trust on progress with the community consultation on the future of the Chambers Institution and to seek approval on the next steps in this process.

Introduction



Courtyard of the Chambers Institution

Scottish Borders Council commissioned the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust (SHBT) to carry out a community consultation exercise to define an agreed Vision for the future use of the Chambers Institution in Peebles. SHBT has over 35 years of experience in finding sustainable uses for important buildings across Scotland and has worked directly with Scottish Borders Council on a number of projects in the Borders, including recent projects to secure the future of the Greenlaw Town Hall and the Haining estate, Selkirk.

Community consultation exercise

The consultation process has included background information gathering, a questionnaire and a series of stakeholder workshops and was undertaken in the period from September 2015 to April 2016. In total:

- 923 people and
- 124 local organisations or businesses were engaged with through this exercise;
- 237 completed questionnaires were submitted and
- 10 interviews completed.

Vision for the Chambers Institution in the 21st century

The Vision for the building was generated from the community's ideas for the building and has been tested through further focussed consultation. The final version was agreed by the Chambers Institution Trust at its meeting on 2 March 2016:

Local people want the Chambers Institution to maintain and enhance its role as the cultural heart of the community and for it to be attractive, welcoming, well-cared for, accessible and affordable.

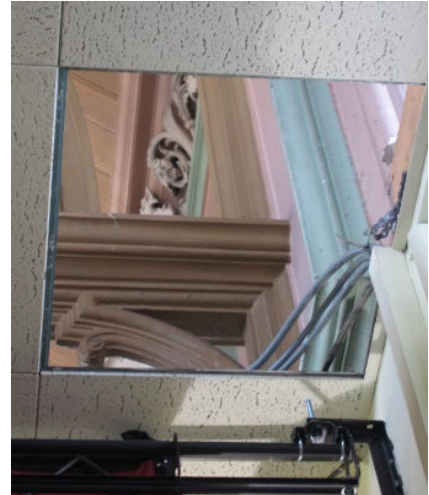
The key uses of the building were identified as: library, museum, art gallery and meeting spaces, and the quiet contemplative courtyard setting for the War Memorial.

Delivering the vision

At their meeting on 2 March 2016, The Chambers Institution Trust agreed that SHBT should deliver a re-ordering exercise to provide a realistic roadmap to deliver a Chambers Institution fit for the 21st century. The agreed process to be adopted is:

- a Design Team to prepare a number of sketch schemes showing re-ordering of the building
- further Community consultation to consider the options
- the Design Team to prepare a final preferred scheme
- a viability appraisal to set out the potential funding for a Capital development project for the Chambers Institution.

The report on the community consultation exercise has been drafted and a copy is circulated with this paper. The report appendices are available on request.



View through the suspended ceiling of the Burgh Hall showing the ceiling / roof structure beyond

Next steps

1. Confirm the procurement process for appointing the Design Team following liaison with Martin Joyce, Service Director - Capital Projects, SBC.
2. The proposed outline timescale for completion of the community consultation is:
 - appointment of Design team in early summer (tbc after SBC input on the procurement process is received)
 - presentation of the architectural scheme designs to the community in late summer / early autumn 2016
 - presentation of the draft community consultation report, including preferred sketch scheme and viability appraisal to the Chambers Institution Trust in early winter 2016
 - completion of community consultation exercise in winter 2016.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Chambers Institution Trust

- **makes comment on** and **approves** the draft report on the community consultation
- **agrees** to the appointment of the Design Team in line with the advice to be received from SBC on the procurement process
- **agrees** to the outline timetable for completion of the community consultation.

19 May 2016