

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING)

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SCO47553

Committee Meeting

2.00pm Monday 16th September 2019

Town Hall, New Galloway

Minutes

1. Present: Ros Hill, Ray Bridgeman, David Hardy, Tom Carlyle, Bob Glaister, Ann Glaister.

In attendance: Sue Vest, David Link, Jamie Ferguson

2. Apologies for absence: Ingrid Gemmell

3. Minutes of meeting of 24th July 2019 were approved.

4. Matters arising: There were no matters arising not already on the agenda

5. Chair's report: There were no additional matters to report.

6. Financial report: This had been circulated in advance and was noted: Balance - £19,539 of which £15,000 is 'restricted/allocated'; agreed to pay Creetown account; underspend on grant was discussed and it was agreed to look for ways of using this.

7. Reports from those in attendance:

i) Sue Vest reported she had met with Ros, Bob and Ann in the morning; she has provided a listing of national and regional policy outcome specifications that LING's work connects with; she had also offered to investigate New Galloway's position in relation to the deprivation index as this is hampering our fund-raising opportunities.

- Sue also reported they are now a team of six – will keep us abreast of further plans and roles;
- Mental health first aid training still available – agreed to explore possibility of sharing a training with others in and around New Galloway – 12 hour programme
- Work relating to access in combination with Capability Scotland still underway and will be pulling together plans, recommendations and findings – links to issues of social isolation. Agreed can be referenced in funding bids. Abby, part of the new team, is leading on the 'farming memories' project and Sue will put us in touch. Agreed there are links to explore and build on with, for example, the walled garden history and the NGS project.

iii) David Link (Third Sector Engagement Officer for the Stewartry):

- David confirmed Christine Clarke will provide the training for us on 9th October on the new Governance Code;
- A roadshow evaluation is taking place to identify what help is needed and to create a diary of options across different localities;

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING)

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SCO47553

Item 8 was deferred to the end of the meeting

9. Viability Testing and Asset Transfer:

Jamie Ferguson attended for this item. Papers had been circulated in advance.

It was noted that the Board had only just received the final versions of the Feasibility Study and the Business Plan from Creetown Initiative and had not yet had an opportunity to study them. Nevertheless, a very fruitful conversation was had. Information/suggestions from Jamie included the following:

- D&G Council have so far achieved 28 Asset transfers (as compared with 70 for Scotland as a whole);
- Confirmation that the lease offer now is 20 years due to legal issues; this can be renewed, but it is increasingly an issue for funders; some big money is still around for the right projects, however. For example, Johnson's school in Kirkcudbright has been awarded £3 million.
- Scottish Government putting increasing emphasis on proportionality in terms of the value of the building and the potential benefit of the transfer.
- We should note that we can ask for what we want - in keeping with the terms of the Community Empowerment Act. For example, we can put in a claw-back option if we want to. Options include, (i) the Council can issue us with a 'letter of comfort' for funders ahead of the actual transfer; (ii) the Council can transfer the building on condition that some of the funding is realised; (iii) we can ask for a transitional period of transfer – maybe two years sliding towards ownership.
- The transfer would be free of charge. D&G will carry the legal costs
- Although D&G will not agree to making repairs and improvements ahead of transfer, they would be able to work with us in looking at ways of finding resources (see Asset transfer website). Also we might look at Land Ownership Scotland's Fund. The Council could give us a licence to make further structural investigations. Noted we should email Jamie and Ingrid subsequently about this in relation to 'Property Services'. **(AG)**
- Important in making our case for Asset Transfer to show how we are building on community support.
- That the process would involve some iterations as they could comment on our business plan and case for transfer and help us to evolve and strengthen it prior to formal submission.
- That the timescale would be a decision within 6 months of a submission, followed by a potentially fairly extended period, due partly to shortage of legal support within the Council.

In the following discussion, LING's concerns were noted:

- that problems identified in the building now might deteriorate over this timescale and could end up costing significantly more than suggested now;
- that clarity over actual ownership of the building – whether it is common good or not – have still not been resolved. Pursue with Jamie subsequently **(AG)**

Noted: send Jamie copies of reports **(AG)**

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING)

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SCO47553

In subsequent discussion each of the trustees was asked in turn what their current thinking was in relation to making a decision about going ahead with an application for Asset Transfer and whether this should be an application for transfer of ownership or for a 20-year lease. All six expressed their view and explained their thinking and a unanimous position emerged that LING should proceed with an application for Asset Transfer of ownership. David Link advised that, as with a house sale prior to exchange of contracts, the power would remain with us to withdraw if that was subsequently deemed necessary.

10. Funding Bids and priorities:

A paper had been circulated in advance. It was agreed to regard the installation of a lift and accessible toilets alongside the need for structural surveys and remedial action as priorities in parallel.

In relation to discussing the need for further structural investigations, it was agreed to approach Andrew Ward to see whether he could assist with advising us how to proceed and seeking funding to support this. It was agreed that the £1000 still available from the Viability Testing grants could be appropriately put towards this **(AG)**.

11. The New Galloway Story: Bob reported that he was exploring some potential designers of the display boards; he envisaged planning an event over the next few months to take place in the New Year at which options and ideas for content and design would be explored.

12. Training and Development opportunities for Trustees and Volunteers:

- i) Report from Heritage Trust Network was received
- ii) Plans for 9th and 10th October were noted
- iii) Agreed to pursue notion of a volunteer event in the New Year using the remainder of the grant. To explore with funders whether use of grant could be deferred to the New Year **(AG)**

13. LING Activities, events and plans – past, present and future: Cheese and Wine evening plans were outlined and it was agreed to meet at 4.00 pm on Friday to set up for the event.

Other activities continued as usual.

- The IT session was changing its name in line with a broadening focus.
- It was agreed to look again at potential lunch price increases **(RH)**
- Agreed to put plans for an internet café on the agenda for the next meeting.

14. Publicity and promotion:

- i) Noted that the LING logos and letterhead designs are still being used in the meantime. We can change these subsequently if we wish

Local Initiatives in New Galloway (LING)

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SCO47553

ii) Agreed that the website should be upgraded to allow us to get rid of adverts on the site. Estimated that this will not cost more than around £10 a month. Also noted that Gerry had made an approach about whether we might add information about the pathways and walk options and a meeting was planned. Likely that this would extend to including walled garden. There are a number of issues to consider here. Agreed to report back **(AG)**

15. **Membership and Friends:** There were no further members or friends to report/approve, but it was hoped that the Cheese and Wine event would enable us to recruit some more.

8. (Deferred from earlier on the agenda) **Any reports from Sub-committees:**

i) Celebratory Events Sub-Committee work: Noted that the Christmas Concert is planned for 1st December; also noted that Ray and Avril have resigned from the committee, but that Ros is still a part of it; there will be another meeting on 26th September.

ii) 'Exploring New Galloway': Summary reports from Gerry (for pathways and Jon and Teri for walled garden were tabled and noted).

12. **AOB:**

i) Ray suggested that Duncan McNaught (local photographer) might be approached to see if he would like to set up an exhibition in the Town Hall. Agreed that ray should explore this with him **(RB)**

ii) Noted from Ros that Melinda & Jake McGaw had proposed running a New Year Ceilidh on Hogmanay. Agreed that we would wish to encourage this. Ros would feed back to them **(RH)**

iii) Agreed that we would see if we could store the PA System- from Leader Day of the Region. It was bought for New Galloway several years ago. Part funded by EU so closing down.

iv) Noted Ros has lodged an interest in the Town Hall being part of the Open Doors event next September

v) Agreed to Ros's suggestion that we might look at making the hall available for Spring Fling activities to be used by people looking for a suitable venue, eg. The Art Group

vi) Agreed that David will act as Deputy Chair during Ros' absence in November. Ray will handle the diary and bookings.

13. **Date of next meeting:** to be arranged for either 8th or 9th November.