

PENICUIK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST
Minutes of Steering Committee Meeting 19 April 2006

Apologies: Anne Dalrymple, Jane Kelly, Brian Miller

Roger Kelly had to leave for another meeting after a few minutes

Attending: Bob MacDonald (Convener), Roger Hipkin, Jack McGowan, Ian Watson, Margaret Coull, Sheila Findlay, Sheila Findlay Martin, Grace Marques, Beth Scarr, Mose Hutchison, Bob Jarmson, Sonia Stewart, Ulla Hipkin.

1 Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting proposed by Ian Watson, seconded by Margaret Coull and accepted. Sheila Findlay Martin commented about their thorough and open content.

2 Matters arising

2.1 §10.1 Postcard for Penicuik

Publicity was given in Penicuik News and the Midlothian Advertiser as well as in the Town Crier. Roger Hipkin will print trial postcards from the winning entries through the University Printing dept (to test quality of sample copy, but then allowing up to 8 designs) or copies will be ordered from the Postcard Company. Cost price 9 - 11p each. Sell to other outlets at a small profit – 20p suggested instead of cost price. Suggested retail cost 30p. Also to be sold in the Town Hall. £25 to be given to the winner.

2.2 §10.11 Constitution

Jack McGowan reported that modification if passed at the AGM should entitle us to charitable status. The proposed revised copy of the constitution to be available at the meeting, noting the aims had to be reworded. Sheila Findlay Martin drew attention to the Objects where 'race' was missing. It was decided not to include it but to stick to the recommended wording by the charity commissioner.

4 Correspondence over Town Hall

Letter to Trevor Muir (Chief Executive, Midlothian Council) about our proposal of the long term plans for the Town Hall was sent 25 March: two sides of A4 – copies available at this meeting. This included a careful analysis of the current occupants/users, recording number of hours in each room which contributed an income of £16000. The Lesser Hall has the highest occupancy rate of 22%. Our proposal is to increase the occupancy in the whole building to 20% which will cover the total expenditure required to make the building viable and to get other revenues and grants. The 'Dundee Formula' regarding the cooperation between the local authority and a trust, such as in Buckie, was cited in the letter as a way forward.

A reply from Trevor Muir had been received which noted our proposal for a partnership agreement and commented on the timescale, with a slight less unfriendly tone than usual. A draft follow-up letter was discussed.

The letter of 25 March to Trevor Muir and all the Midlothian Councillors was tabled at the Community Council meeting. The contents were publicised by Mike Jackson besides (with an article about a Postcard for Penicuik our two items filled the front page in Penicuik News). Cllr David Fletcher complained to the Secretary when they met at the Community Council meeting that we accuse Midlothian Council of secrecy over the asset review. However, we note that no official or Councillor has commented on our statement that Midlothian Council disqualified itself from the landfill grant we encouraged them to apply for. Sheila Findlay Martin raised the question of what our long-term, fall-back objectives were: would the Trust be content to see the Council preserve the Town Hall as for example Council offices? Although some felt it was necessary to accept this, a consensus view was that we needed to maintain the objective of keeping the Town Hall as a community facility and gaining community input to its management.

5 The Annual General Meeting

Bob MacDonald, chairing the AGM, had a questionnaire to be handed out at the meeting.

5.1 Annual Report

The secretary presented it to the Committee a 12-side A5 booklet about PCDT, our aims and what we had done this first year, combined with an announcement of the AGM. The content was approved. It was agreed to revise the front cover to include the Trust logo, improve the front cover layout and give less prominence to the text "Annual General Meeting".

5.2 Leaflet drop

It was proposed that we should aim to deliver the Annual Report to all Penicuik households. In any case, we had a commitment to send a copy to all 156 Friends. The printing cost would be about £120 per 1000

copies. Estimates of the number of houses in Penicuik was unknown with estimates ranging from 3000 to 7000. An alternative suggestion was to deliver only a one-side sheet with information about the AGM and not include other information, so as to encourage people to come and find out at the meeting. Jack McGowan pointed out that the purpose of the full leaflet was not only to publicise the AGM but also to give background information which has not been forthcoming in the local press, so that all people in Penicuik would have the opportunity to read what we are about, even if they are unable to come. The significant cost of producing the full report had the additional justification of general publicity and the delivery effort was the same. A motion that we attempt to get the full leaflet out to all houses in Penicuik was accepted by 7 votes to 2 against, 2 abstentions.

5.3 Presentations

A powerpoint presentation about PCDT would be prepared and presented by the secretary, which would incorporate material from Colin McCall about the Jackson Street Community Education Centre, Mauricewood Community Centre and other Community sites in Penicuik.

Sheila Findlay tabled graphs based on the information she had extracted from diaries about the bookings and duration of use of the Town Hall in the past. They showed a marked increase in booking for 2005 compared with 5 previous years. These would be included in the AGM presentation.

The success of having different people making short presentations at last years General Meeting was noted. Sheila Findlay will speak about the work of the Oral History group and preparation for recording Historical interviews. The group has applied for an Award for All grant of £4445 for equipment; however, announcing the success of this grant is embargoed until May 26.

Ian Watson will also give a short report on progress towards a Tourisms and Information Centre. He reported that there had been 6 people offering to help.

5.4 Treasurer's Report

The draft accounts were presented and included in the booklet to be circulated. A draft financial report had been prepared for inclusion in the annual report booklet. The definitive version was with our auditor, R W Sheridan, and would be presented at the AGM.

5.5 Election of Steering Committee

The current committee had been asked in the previous committee meeting whether they were willing to remain on the committee and only Sonia Stewart wished to withdraw. It was then also decided that, in addition, new members would be needed and should be proposed. Arrangements for proposal forms were left to the secretary.

6 Any other business

6.1 Future events

Saturday May 6: "Something in the Air" organised by Ian Watson, including model aircraft display, try out a flight simulator, find out about radio hams and WIFI, maybe a plan re digital provision for Penicuik, would take place in the Cowan Hall upstairs, and **the Local History month starting with Oral and Family History**, organised by Margaret Coull and Sheila Findlay would be in the Lesser Hall.

Ian Watson mentioned that History Man will be televised in September. There are 7 digs planned which include Pathhead living history and if Penicuik comes up with a decent site asap we might be able to participate. The Hawick Tourism Trail is willing to come and advise. There is also a project for Leader+ funding for outdoor activities and we have good access to the countryside eg need infrastructure and signposting for network of walks.

6.2 Insurance

The question arose whether we need insurance for public liability or whether the Town Hall has insurance and the Council is liable as we pay rent. The secretary to investigate.

7 Date of next committee meeting

Wednesday 17 May at 7.30pm – 10pm.

[Note: this date was changed at the AGM because of a clash with a public meeting organised by the Ladywood Centre users' group; a new date had to be found.]

Ulla Hipkin