

Penicuik Community Development Trust
Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting on 20 July 2006
at 7.30 pm in Penicuik Town Hall, Marriage Room

- 1 **Apologies:** Barbara Dalgleish, Anne Dalrymple, Bob Jarmson and Brian Miller had sent apologies and emailed their voting intentions.

Attending: Pauline Archibald, Margaret Coull, Bill Fearnley, Sheila Findlay, Sheila Findlay-Martin, Julian Hall, Roger Hipkin, Ulla Hipkin, Mose Hutchinson (arrived after voting), Jane Kelly (left before voting), Roger Kelly, Colin McCall, Bob Macdonald, Jack McGowan, Jane Mackintosh, Grace Marques, Stuart Ritchie, Beth Scarr

2 **Motions from the Chair**

Three motions had been circulated to all steering committee members in advance of the meeting, with instructions about how to submit a 'postal vote' if necessary. For this reason, the notice stated that the chair would not accept amendments.

“2.1 The Trust confirms its central commitment to the Cowan Institute (Penicuik Town Hall) as a long-term focus for community activities in Penicuik. We welcome the stability now given to its preservation for community use by the recent decision of Midlothian Council, together with their commitment to provide full disabled access.”

“2.2 The Trust confirms its commitment to supporting community activities throughout Penicuik.”

“2.3 The Trust now also wants to explore any potential for other property to supplement these facilities in support the Trust's aims and activities. Any investigation should not compromise any of the aims of the Trust. If property assets are acquired in the future, they must not jeopardise the resources of the Trust or its members.”

Motion 2.1 was a paraphrase of one of the themes within the constitutional aims. After discussions, in which Sheila Findlay Martin asked to have minuted her objection to the wording of the motion, a proposal, made by Bill Fearnley and seconded by Jack McGowan, to put the motion the vote was passed. The Secretary summarised the postal votes and tabled a print out of their emails.

The votes on motion 2.1 were: 15 in favour, 4 abstaining and 1 against.

Motion 2.2 was passed unanimously.

Motion 2.3 was passed by 19 votes to nil, with one abstention.

3 **The Salvation Army Hall**

Bob Macdonald spoke to his Discussion Document on Assets, tabled at the last meeting. A note of our interest had been given to the seller's agent. A meeting would be arranged in the coming week so that interested committee members could view the Hall.

[This visit took place on Monday 24th July and was attended by Bob MacDonald, Sheila Findlay, Margaret Coull, Bill Fearnley, Ian Watson, Roger and Jane Kelly, Colin McCall, Jack McGowan and Roger Hipkin.]

Note on presentation

The Secretary reported that there were occasionally cases where he judged that information supplementary to or subsequent to that given out at meeting could usefully be included. In these cases, he followed a common convention of enclosing the supplementary information in square brackets and putting it in italics.

The lead-time to get grant funding for purchase was so short that an initial annual lease was the preferred option. This would give time to acquire funds and develop a business plan. Bob Macdonald would pursue options with DTAS, Sencot and the seller's agent.

Motion 2.3 confirmed that the Steering Committee as a whole was in favour of the principle of acquiring property suitable for community facilities, like the Salvation Army Hall. Even if unsuccessful in this case, preparatory work would be a valuable exercise because other buildings might also become available. Discussion included Jackson Street School, whose potential for housing social enterprise groups was greater but whose cost would be much larger.

A working group was set up to put together further information and report findings to the full Steering Committee. As well as specific options related to buying the Salvation Army Hall, its wider remit was to investigate what steps needed to be taken in order to buy property while satisfying the protection required by Motion 2.3.

The members were: Bob Macdonald (convenor), Margaret Coull, Bill Fearnley, Sheila Findlay, Sheila Findlay-Martin. Sheila Findlay and Jack McGowan would be the two office bearers who would fulfil the liaison role recommended for Working Groups.

The Chair thanked Bob MacDonald for alerting the Trust to the sale of the Salvation Army Hall and grasping the potential opportunity to buy or lease it.

4 Minutes of the Meeting on 19 June

Corrections already intimated to the Secretary:

§4.2 Membership group: Jack McGowan's name should have been underlined but Grace Marques and he are happy with a joint role.

Other Community Facilities group: Bill Fearnley rather than Colin McCall should have been underlined.

§7.1 *For* "This was distributed at Eastfield Primary School but other head teachers were instructed by the Education Department not to give it out to children." *Read* "This was to be given to head teachers for children to take home to their parents."

Additions:

§3a Treasurer's report. The Treasurer had asked for an inventory of our equipment to be drawn up and had asked about insurance.

Ian Watson had asked that First Aid Training be arranged.

§6 [*Italicised insert*] for "... approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair, ..." read "... approved by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer, ..."

5 Matters Arising

Previous Matters Arising §4 Postcard for Penicuik

The Secretary confirmed the information given in the last minutes. He also confirmed the information he had given the Treasurer by email [*June 6, 2006*]: the Trust had paid £229.49 and he was underwriting the additional cost until it was justified by sales and until it gained approval of the whole committee.

§4.1 Financial limits

The Treasurer proposed an upper limit of £30 rather than £50 for non-routine expenditure not specifically sanctioned by the Steering Committee.

§8.1 DTA Questionnaire

The Secretary reported that he had not had time to circulate the document but had been able to complete it himself in time to meet the DTA deadline. The information needed was non-controversial, referring to who we were, what we did and our last year's accounts, together with our approximate assets.

6 Reports on working groups

Reports and discussion on them were deferred until the next meeting.

7 Report on the future of community and leisure centres.

7.1 The Ladywood group

The Trust maintained liaison, through common membership of Jack McGowan, Bill Fearnley, Colin McCall and Roger Hipkin, with the group coordinating opposition to closure of community facilities in Ladywood and Jackson Street School.

Bill Fearnley reported that meetings had been held by the Ladywood Steering Group who had been seeking information under the Freedom of Information Act about what decisions about closure were made when and for what reason. In the Borders and elsewhere, Leisure Centres had been taken over and run by Trusts but this required the goodwill and cooperation of the local authority.

The YMCA is reported to be in the process of acquiring the Queensway Leisure Centre building.

Jack McGowan reported that the Crime Prevention Panel had prepared a leaflet warning parents about the dangers to their children of losing adjacent leisure facilities and having to make cross-town journeys instead.

7.2 Penicuik Town Hall

The Secretary spoke to the previously circulated report of the meeting he had had with Tony Malone and with the Director of Community Development, Charles Galbraith, where more information had been given about Midlothian Council's plans for the Town Hall.

The whole Town Hall would be closed to the public during the approximately 4 months of refurbishment. The Secretary had written to the North Kirk to ask whether we could advertise their Open Doors as a temporary replacement, noting concerns for the group of people who had come to depend on the Saturday Open House for fellowship. Colin McCall suggested we move to Jackson Street School during the refurbishments, since it was taking bookings throughout the period.

8 Dates of future meetings

Few people had responded to the Secretary's request for when they were regularly unavailable/available so he was not able to confirm which day of the week and when in the month all future meetings would be.

9 Any other business

9.1 Declaration of interests

The Secretary noted that there *had* been a declaration of members' interests: the first item on the Steering Committee agenda for its meeting after the AGM was "Welcome and Interests".

9.2 Future programme

There was a brief discussion with suggestions for future events. We should renew our database, compiled more than a year ago, of Town Hall users, contact information and needs. We did intend to repeat last year's successful 'Society's Fair', in late September or early October, in which local organisations occupied a table in the Town Hall to advertise their activities and seek members. We already had an arrangement to participate in Dr Neville Suttle's "African Convention", bringing together charitable groups raising aid for Africa, on September 29th.